Exhibit 5: Mitigated Negative Declaration and Notice of Declaration

county of ventura

Paul S. Grossgold
Director

GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY
Hall of Administration
800 South Victoria Avenue, L#1000
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-3700

FILED
Ventura County
County Clerk and Recorder

NOV 27 2009

JAMES B. BECKER
Assistant County Clerk and Recorder
By _____, Deputy

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

TO:☒ County Clerk
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Ave., L#1210
Ventura, CA 93009

FROM: County of Ventura
General Services Agency, Parks
800 S. Victoria Ave., L#1030
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Filing Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21109 or 21152 of the Pubic Resources Code.

PROJECT TITLE: Ojai Valley Trail Bridge at San Antonio Creek

POSTED
NOV 27 2009 - MAY 06 2010
JAMES B. BECKER
Assistant County Clerk and Recorder
By: _____, Deputy

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO.: 2009071051

CONTACT PERSON: Theresa Lubin

TELEPHONE NO.: (805) 654-3968

PROJECT LOCATION: San Antonio Creek, in the unincorporated area approximately 0.3 miles north of the community of Casitas Springs, California at the confluence of the Ventura River and San Antonio Creek.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project is a fish passage restoration project and the replacement of the Ojai Valley Trail culvert crossing with a bridge at the San Antonio Creek. The project includes the removal of the existing culverts and associated fill, construction of the bridge and restoration of the site. The purpose of the restoration project is to provide year-round all weather access to the Ojai Valley Trail across the San Antonio Creek and to facilitate the re-establishment of steelhead and other aquatic and terrestrial species movement through the project area.

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1. The project **will** ☐ **will not** ☒ have a significant effect on the environment.

2. ☐ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared and certified for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

3. ☒ A Negative Declaration was prepared and certified for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
The EIR or Negative Declaration and record of project approval may be examined at:
GSA-Parks Division, Hall of Administration, County Government Center.

Steve Morgan
Chief Deputy Director
Facilities & Materials
L#3000
(805) 654-3881

Rebecca Arnold
Deputy Director
Administrative Services
L#1000
(805) 648-9205

Ron Van Dyck
Deputy Director
Parks Department
L#1030
(805) 654-3945

Dennis Scamardo
Manager - Fleet Services
11201-A1 Riverbank Dr., L#5030
Ventura, CA 93004
(805) 672-2041

4. Mitigation Measures **were** ☒ **were not** ☐ made a condition of the approval of the project.

5. Findings **were** ☒ **were not** ☐ made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

6. A Statement of Overriding Considerations **was** ☐ **was not** ☒ adopted for this project.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING:

Signature (Public Agency):

TM

Theresa Lubin, Program Administrator
General Services Agency, Parks Department

11.24.09

Date

20091127-10017788-0 1/1
Ventura County Clerk and Recorder
James B. Becker, Assistant
11/27/2009 10:56:26 AM
369807 $2043.00 AY

Department of Fish & Game Environmental Filing Transmittal Memorandum/Filing Cash Receipt

Please complete the information and submit a transmittal with each set of documents presented for filing. Please provide an original set and (3) three sets of copies for filing. Thank you.

Project Title: Ojai Valley Trail Bridge at San Antonio Creek

Name of Agency filing attached document: County of Ventura, General Services Agency

The above named agency is filing as: ☒ Lead Agency ☐ Responsible Agency ☐ Trustee Agency

Address of Filing Agency: 800 South Victoria Ave., L#1030 Ventura CA 93009

Document Type (check one):

☐ Negative Declaration ☒ Mitigated Neg. Declaration ☐ Environmental Impact Report ☐ Exemption

Project Applicant: County of Ventura, General Services Agency, Parks Department

Project Applicant Address: 800 S. Victoria Ave., L#1030

Project Applicant Phone Number: (805) 654-3968

Project Applicant is (check one):

☒ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

If the agency presenting this document is filing as the responsible agency, **provide a copy** of the Lead Agency's filed documents and complete the following:

Lead Agency: _____

Lead Agency's Project Title: _____

Lead Agency's State Receipt #: _____ Lead Agency's Document #: _____

Check Applicable Fees (check all that apply):

- ☒ Negative Declaration ($1,993.00)
- ☐ Environmental Impact Report ($2,768.25)
- ☐ Categorically Exempt
- ☐ Statutorily Exempt
- ☒ County Administrative Fee ($50.00)
- ☐ De Minimus Impact (**EXEMPT - Provide a Certificate of Fee Exemption**)
- ☐ Filed by responsible agency, fees paid by lead agency (Attach a copy of Lead Agency's filing & receipt.)
- ☐ Fees have already been paid (Attach a copy of the prior filing and proof of payment.)

Prepared by: Theresa Lubin (Name) Program Administrator (Title)

Signature: _____ 11/24/09 (Date) (805) 654-3968 (Phone #)

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE – The following portion will be completed by the Ventura County Clerk's Office.

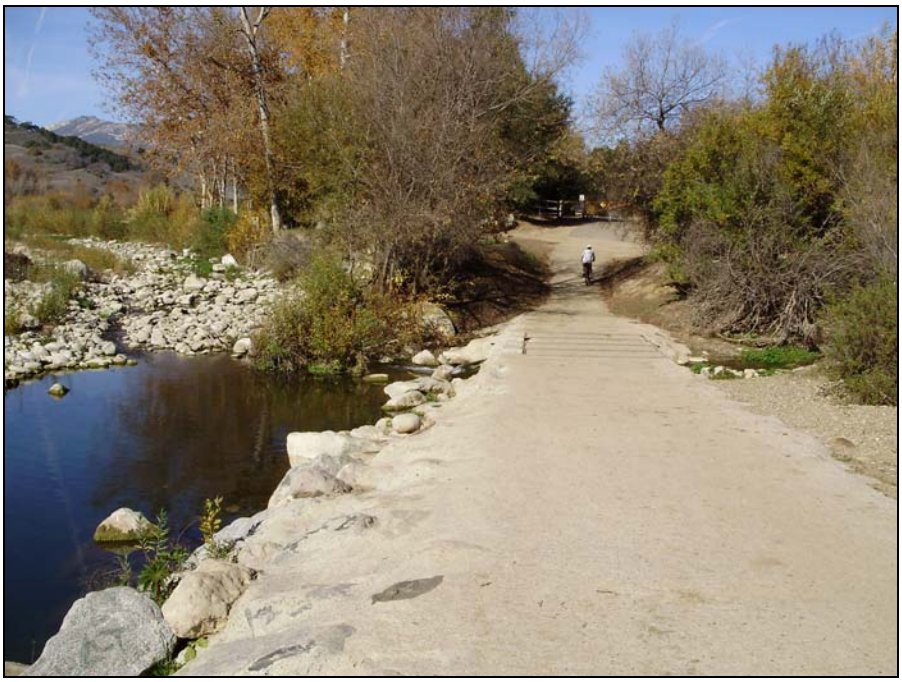
Total $ received: $2043-

Signature of person receiving payment: Nicole Ayala, Deputy County Clerk

(01/2009) CC&R

Posted: NOV 27 2009 through MAY 06 2010

OJAI VALLEY TRAIL
SAN ANTONIO CREEK BRIDGE



MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Lead Agency:

Ventura County General Services Agency
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California, 93009
Contact: Ms. Theresa Lubin

Prepared by:

Padre Associates, Inc.
1861 Knoll Drive
Ventura, CA 93003

October 2009

Project No. 0802-2801

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of the replacement of the Ojai Valley Trail culvert crossing with a bridge at San Antonio Creek, including removal of the existing culverts and associated fill, construction of the bridge and site restoration. The project limits are identified in Figure 2, and a conceptual bridge design is provided as Figure 3. Photographs of the project site are provided as Figure 4.

Culvert Removal

The existing reinforced concrete culverts would be removed, including associated foundation and fill. Due to the depth of the culvert foundations, a large excavation would be needed, and may require diversion of surface flow of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River.

New Bridge

Based on conceptual plans developed to date, the bridge would have an overall length of 790 feet, including approach ramps. The bridge span would be approximately 510 feet. The bridge deck elevation would be at about 323 feet, about 10 to 12 feet higher than the existing trail surface elevation. Each of seven bridge segments would be founded on an elevated concrete foundation structure consisting of a double concrete pier with grade beam, or a single monolithic pier with a flattened Y-shaped upper member. Bridge support piers would be placed at about 6 locations along the span. Each of the bridge segments would consist of pre-fabricated steel truss members, with a 10 foot-wide deck, and 54 inch-high handrails. The bridge would be designed to support pedestrians and bicycles, and occasional light-weight patrol vehicles (golf cart-sized). The bridge approach ramp grade would be 5 percent or less to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

The overall maximum height of the bridge would be at 330 feet elevation, about 22 feet above the San Antonio Creek streambed, and at about the same elevation of the roofline of the adjacent residences to the north. A photograph of the conceptual bridge design is provided in Figure 5, including a photograph of the existing Ojai Valley Trail bridge at Cañada Larga as a comparison.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located within and adjacent to San Antonio Creek, within the unincorporated portion of Ventura County, approximately 0.3 miles north of the community of Casitas Springs, California (Figure 1). The proposed bridge would be located approximately 850 feet west of the State Route 33 bridge over San Antonio Creek.

PROJECT PROPONENT

Ventura County General Services Agency
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Contact: Theresa Lubin (805/654-3968)

PROPOSED FINDINGS

The Ventura County General Services Agency (GSA) has prepared this Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) pursuant to Sections 15070-15075 of the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act and the County of Ventura Administrative Supplement to the State CEQA Guidelines. This Mitigated Negative Declaration documents GSA's finding that there are no significantly adverse unavoidable impacts associated with the proposed project, and the project does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The attached Initial Study identifies and discusses potential impacts, mitigation measures and residual impacts for identified subject areas.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

In compliance with Section 15073 of the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, GSA accepted written comments on the adequacy of the information contained in the Draft MND during the public review period ending September 1, 2009. Comment letters were received from the following parties:

- San Buenaventura Conservancy;
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- California Department of Fish and Game;
- Ventura County Air Pollution Control District;
- Ojai Valley Land Conservancy;
- Ray Hall & Mary Appel; and
- Surfrider Foundation.

Section 15074(b) of the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, requires the decision-making body to consider comments received on the MND when approving the project. Copies of the comment letters and full responses are provided in Appendix D. Changes to the Draft MND in response to public comments are provided in underline and strike-out mode.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures have been integrated into the proposed project, and would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant.

Air Quality

Air emissions reduction measures recommended by the Ventura County APCD Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (revised 2003) have been incorporated into the project including:

- The area disturbed by clearing, grading, earth moving, or excavation operations shall be minimized to prevent excessive amounts of dust.
- Pre-grading/excavation activities shall include watering the area to be graded or excavated before commencement of grading or excavation operations. Application of water (preferably reclaimed, if available) should penetrate sufficiently to minimize fugitive dust during grading activities.

- All trucks shall be required to cover their loads as required by California Vehicle Code §23114.
- All graded and excavated material, exposed soil areas, and active portions of the construction site, including unpaved on-site roadways, shall be treated to prevent fugitive dust. Treatment shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, periodic watering, application of environmentally-safe soil stabilization materials, and/or roll-compaction as appropriate. Watering shall be done as often as necessary and reclaimed water shall be used whenever possible.
- Graded and/or excavated inactive areas of the construction site shall be monitored at least weekly for dust stabilization. Soil stabilization methods, such as water and roll-compaction, and environmentally-safe dust control materials, shall be periodically applied to portions of the construction site that are inactive for over four days. If no further grading or excavation operations are planned for the area, the area shall be seeded and watered until plant growth is evident, or periodically treated with environmentally-safe dust suppressants, to prevent excessive fugitive dust.
- Signs shall be posted on-site limiting traffic to 15 miles per hour or less.
- During periods of high winds (i.e., wind speed sufficient to cause fugitive dust to impact adjacent properties), all clearing, grading, earth moving, and excavation operations shall be curtailed to the degree necessary to prevent fugitive dust created by on-site activities and operations from being a nuisance or hazard, either off-site or on-site. The site superintendent/supervisor shall use his/her discretion in conjunction with the APCD in determining when winds are excessive.
- Adjacent streets and roads shall be swept at least once per day, preferably at the end of the day, if visible soil material is carried over to adjacent streets and roads.
- Personnel involved in grading operations, including contractors and subcontractors, shall be advised to wear respiratory protection in accordance with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health regulations.
- Material stockpiles shall be enclosed, covered, stabilized, or otherwise treated as needed to prevent blowing fugitive dust off-site.
- All project construction and site preparation operations shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable Ventura County APCD Rules and Regulations with emphasis on Rule 50 (Opacity), Rule 51 (Nuisance), Rule 55 (Fugitive Dust) and Rule 10 (Permits Required).

Water Quality - Hydraulic Hazards - Hazardous Materials

The following Best Management Practices have been incorporated into the project to minimize potential water quality impacts during project construction. Potential water quality impacts of the project would be mitigated to a less than significant level with the implementation of these measures.

- All ground disturbance shall be limited to the dry season or periods when rainfall is not predicted, to minimize erosion and sediment transport to surface waters;

- Disturbed areas where work has been completed shall be stabilized or re-vegetated prior to the start of the rainy season;
- Straw wattles (or equivalent measures) shall be used to trap suspended sediment downstream of the project site during creation and destruction of the diversion berm;
- Groundwater discharged to surface waters shall be allowed to settle to reduce suspended sediment, prior to such discharge;
- Impacts to vegetation within and adjacent to the project site shall be minimized. The work area shall be flagged to identify its limits prior to clearing and grubbing. Vegetation shall not be removed or intentionally damaged beyond these limits.
- Construction materials and soil piles shall be placed in designated areas where they could not enter stream flow due to spillage or erosion.
- Waste and debris generated during construction shall be stored in designated waste collection areas and containers away from watercourses, and shall be disposed of regularly.
- All fueling of heavy equipment shall occur in a designated area removed from San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River, such that any spillage would not enter surface waters. The designated area shall include a drain pan or drop cloth and absorbent materials to clean up spills.
- Vehicles and equipment shall be maintained properly to prevent leakage of hydrocarbons and coolant, and shall be examined for leaks on a daily basis. All maintenance shall occur in a designated offsite area. The designated area shall include a drain pan or drop cloth and absorbent materials to clean up spills.
- Any accidental spill of hydrocarbons or coolant that may occur on the construction site shall be cleaned immediately. Absorbent materials shall be maintained on the construction site for this purpose. The Regional Board shall be notified immediately in the event of an accidental spill to ensure proper clean up and disposal of waste.

Biological Resources

The following measures would be fully implemented to offset potential inconsistencies with the wetland policies of the General Plan, and to prevent significant impacts to listed species and compensate for temporary impacts to wetlands and sensitive communities.

- All construction work affecting surface waters shall be conducted during the dry season (April 1 to October 1) when steelhead are less likely to be present.
- A mitigation and monitoring plan shall be developed in coordination with regulatory agencies, with the goal to replace wetlands, aquatic and riparian habitat, and oak trees removed during construction.
- The mitigation plan shall be fully implemented, and monitored and maintained to ensure success.

- A pre-construction survey(s) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of listed wildlife species in the immediate project area. These surveys shall include protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo.
- A qualified biologist shall monitor construction activities on a periodic basis and survey for listed species.
- If active least Bell's vireo nests are found in the project area during the pre-construction survey or during monitoring, construction activities shall be postponed or re-directed near active nests, until the young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.
- If California red-legged frog is found within the work area during construction, they shall be relocated by a qualified biologist under the authorization of a project-specific Biological Opinion.
- If large trout (presumed steelhead) are found during the pre-construction survey, steelhead shall be coaxed into moving out of the work area under the authorization of a project-specific Biological Opinion.
- Existing surface flow in San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River shall be diverted prior to excavation or other heavy equipment activity as needed to minimize use of heavy equipment in surface water.
- Surface water shall not be diverted until the diversion berm is completed and a clear flow path for the water has been established.
- Qualified biologists shall be present during flow diversion activities, and rescue stranded fish and California red-legged frog tadpoles under the authorization of a project-specific Biological Opinion, and relocate them to suitable undisturbed habitat.

The following measures (in combination with measures listed above) would be fully implemented to prevent significant impacts to non-listed special-status wildlife species and their habitat:

- A pre-construction survey(s) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of special-status wildlife species in the immediate project area.
- If southwestern pond turtle and/or two-striped garter snake are found in the project area, qualified biologists shall be present during construction to detect and relocate these species to suitable habitat in areas that would not be affected by construction.
- If nesting migratory birds are found in the project area, construction activities shall be postponed or re-directed near active nests, until the young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.
- If nesting special-status bird species (including raptors) are found in the project area, construction activities shall be postponed or re-directed near active nests, until the young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.

Archeological Resources

The following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project to prevent significant impacts, should resources be found during excavation.

- In the event that archeological resources are exposed during project construction, all earth disturbing work within the vicinity of the find shall be temporarily suspended or redirected until an archeologist has evaluated the nature and significance of the find. After the find has been appropriately mitigated, work in the area may resume.
- If human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin and deposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission.

Noise

The following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project to prevent significant construction noise impacts.

- Work hours shall be limited to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday; with no work on weekends or holidays, except under emergency circumstances;
- Trucks and equipment shall be operated with exhaust silencers in place and engine covers closed and in good repair; and
- GSA shall inform residents adjacent to the project site of the construction schedule and periods of anticipated high noise levels (primarily pile driving).

Public Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities

The following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project to minimize temporary loss of use of the Ojai Valley Trail during bridge construction, and to ensure safe operation of the Trail during construction. These measures would avoid significant impacts.

- Signage warning approaching OVT users about bridge construction shall be placed approximately 300 feet north and south of the work area;
- A detour (including fencing) shall be provided around the bridge work area at the end of each work week to allow safe usage of the OVT on weekends;

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

An Initial Study has been prepared for the Ojai Valley Trail Bridge Project, which has been proposed by the Ventura County General Services Agency (GSA), the project proponent. Section 2.0 of this document provides a description of the proposed project. GSA is also the "lead agency" for the proposed project. As defined by Section 15367 of the CEQA Guidelines, the lead agency is "the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant impact on the environment." Based on the findings of the Impact Analysis (Section 4.0 of this Initial Study), it has been determined that the project would not have a significant impact on the environment. As such, a Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for the project in accordance with CEQA.

1.2 PROJECT PROPONENT AND LEAD AGENCY

Ventura County General Services Agency
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Contact: Theresa Lubin (805/654-3968)

1.3 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located within and adjacent to San Antonio Creek, within the unincorporated portion of Ventura County, approximately 0.3 miles north of the community of Casitas Springs, California (Figure 1). The proposed bridge would be located approximately 850 feet west of the State Route 33 bridge over San Antonio Creek.

1.4 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Ojai Valley Trail (OVT) is a 9.5 mile-long multi-purpose trail (bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian) which generally follows the Ventura River, from Foster Park to Ojai. The OVT begins at the terminus of the City of Ventura's Ventura River Trail (at Foster Park) and is managed by the County of Ventura Parks Department. Construction of the OVT along the Ventura River was completed in 1987. The OVT crossing of San Antonio Creek occurs at the creek's confluence with the Ventura River. The existing crossing consists of a reinforced concrete culvert structure with four passages, each about 2 feet tall and 3 feet wide. The top of the culvert serves as the surface for the bike trail crossing (see Figure 4.c). The bike trail approaches to the culvert consist of earthen fill within the streambed on either side of the culvert with riprap slope protection of both the upstream and downstream slopes. Although the crossing was designed to pass low flows and allow higher flows to pass over the top during larger flood events, the bike trail crossing is prone to being washed out by the stream flow, and the culvert structure clogged with debris.

The Ventura River and its tributaries historically provided approximately 40 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for the endangered southern steelhead, and supported a population of several thousand sea-run adults. Although the majority of the river and its tributaries remain in a relatively natural state, the construction of the Casitas Dam, Matilja Dam and Robles Diversion in the late 1940's and 1950's prevented steelhead from accessing most of the suitable spawning and rearing habitat in the river system, decimating the anadromous population, which is now estimated to be on the order of a few hundred individuals or less. San Antonio Creek is downstream of these major passage barriers and provides some of the best remaining spawning and rearing habitat currently accesible to sea-run steelhead in the Ventura River Watershed.

The San Antonio Creek crossing is a combination of a culvert undercrossing and Arizona-type dry weather crossing. During winter storms, the culverts typically fill with aluvium, resulting in continuous flooding of the OVT. In January and February 2005, a large part of the trail was washed out, it was reconstructed and then washed out again in March 2008 when storm flows relocated the Ventura River low flow channel to the western edge of the OVT. Improvements are needed to facilitate passage of migrating steelhead to an approximately 25 square mile upstream watershed including approximately 50 miles of blueline streams, and to elevate the OVT above storm flows at the confluence of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River. The Tri-County F.I.S.H. Team identified the Ventura River/San Antonio Creek Trail Crossing as the number one restoration on the 2007 barrier priority list. San Antonio Creek is the first major tributary to the Ventura River, one of the remaining systems in southern California capable of supporting steelhead spawning and rearing.

The replacement of the San Antonio Creek OVT crossing with a bridge is also a locally significant project for many reasons. In addition to improving passage for steelhead and other aquatic species, the OVT is both an important recreation and transportation facility in Ventura County. The current crossing often fills with sediment and must be hand cleared several times during a heavy winter season. In the past, during some of the heavier storm years, the trail has been closed for months while waiting for the flows to receed enough to allow the culverts to be cleared. During the past three years since 2005, the OVT just south of the crossing has washed out three times (see Figure 4.a). The damage has been significantly greater with each occurrence as have the maintenance costs. The OVT is such an important transit facility the public often disregards the closed gates and signs, going around them to cross the channel while flows are still present, creating a dangerous liability for the County. A bridge would provide a safe route year round and offer a pleasant vantage point for OVT users to stop and admire the natural beauty of the area.

The primary objectives of the proposed project are:

- Improve fish passage;
- Provide a low maintenance, all-weather crossing of San Antonio Creek;
- Improve user safety on the OVT during high flows: and
- Minimize storm-related closures of this OVT creek crossing.

1.5 PREPARERS OF THE INITIAL STUDY

This document was prepared for GSA by the following staff of Padre Associates, Inc.:

Matt Ingamells, Project Manager

Suzun Rasmusson, Graphics Specialist

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT COMPONENTS

The project consists of the replacement of the Ojai Valley Trail culvert crossing with a bridge at San Antonio Creek, including removal of the existing culverts and associated fill, construction of the bridge and site restoration. The project limits are identified in Figure 2, and a conceptual bridge design is provided as Figure 3. Photographs of the project site are provided as Figure 4.

2.1.1 Culvert Removal

The existing reinforced concrete culverts would be removed, including associated foundation and fill. Due to the depth of the culvert foundations, a large excavation would be needed, and may require diversion of surface flow of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River.

2.1.2 New Bridge

Based on conceptual plans developed to date, the bridge would have an overall length of 790 feet, including approach ramps. The bridge span would be approximately 510 feet. The bridge deck elevation would be at about 323 feet, about 10 to 12 feet higher than the existing trail surface elevation. Each of seven bridge segments would be founded on an elevated concrete foundation structure consisting of a double concrete pier with grade beam, or a single monolithic pier with a flattened Y-shaped upper member. Bridge support piers would be placed at about 6 locations along the span. Each of the bridge segments would consist of pre-fabricated steel truss members, with a 10 foot-wide deck, and 54 inch-high handrails. The bridge would be designed to support pedestrians and bicycles, and occasional light-weight patrol vehicles (golf cart-sized). The bridge approach ramp grade would be 5 percent or less to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

The overall maximum height of the bridge would be at 330 feet elevation, about 22 feet above the San Antonio Creek streambed, and at about the same elevation of the roofline of the adjacent residences to the north. A photograph of the conceptual bridge design is provided in Figure 5, including a photograph of the existing Ojai Valley Trail bridge at Cañada Larga as a comparison.

2.2 CONSTRUCTION

2.2.1 General Characteristics

Construction of the project elements would require about 3-4 months to complete, and would preferably be conducted sometime between April and November, when surface flow is relatively low. Cutting of vegetation may occur earlier (January/February) so as to prevent bird nesting in the work area and to allow for construction to begin in April after the rainy season. Construction would be restricted to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Temporary ramps of native earth materials would be constructed as needed to allow access into the riverbed during project construction.

The general sequence of work includes:

- Construction of temporary access ramps;
- Removal of vegetation from the work area;
- Excavation of a pilot channel in the Ventura River;
- Temporary stream flow diversion at San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River;
- Removal of the existing culverts;
- Installation of the bridge abutments and pier footings;
- Installation of the support piers and bridge segments;
- Construction of the bridge approaches;
- Restoration of stream flow to the pre-construction channel (San Antonio Creek); and
- Site restoration and planting native vegetation.

Equipment to be used includes tracked tractors (dozers), excavators, cranes, wheeled loaders, flatbed trucks and water truck. Cut and fill volumes would be balanced on-site.

2.2.2 Work Area

The work area comprises approximately 3.65 acres, including the streambeds of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River and work areas along the bridge alignment.

2.2.3 Access and Staging

Peak day traffic would be about 30 round trips per day. Contractors and equipment would enter the site from Old Creek Road off State Route 33. Signage and/or flagmen would be used as needed to allow trucks to safely decelerate/accelerate off of/onto State Route 33 from Old Creek Road. Equipment and materials staging/storage would occur along Old Creek Road northeast of the work area. There would be no equipment staging within the riverbed.

2.2.4 Diversion and Control of Surface Water

Surface flow in San Antonio Creek would be diverted away from work areas to allow removal of the existing culverts, and install bridge abutments and pier footings. An earthen berm would be used to impound surface water and direct flow into a polyethylene pipe, which would carry flow through the work area to the Ventura River. Following the completion of bridge construction, surface flow would be returned to the original low flow channel.

Surface flow in the Ventura River would be diverted away from the bridge alignment to allow removal of existing culverts and other project-related tasks. A pilot channel would be excavated to the west of the existing channel, and an earthen berm would be constructed to direct surface flow into the new channel.

2.2.5 Control of Groundwater

Groundwater may be encountered during excavation for pier footings and drilling for abutment piles. If so, it would be collected with sump pumps and used to suppress dust in the project area, and/or discharged to the creek downstream of the work site in accordance with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Waste Discharge Permit from the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.

2.2.6 Site Restoration

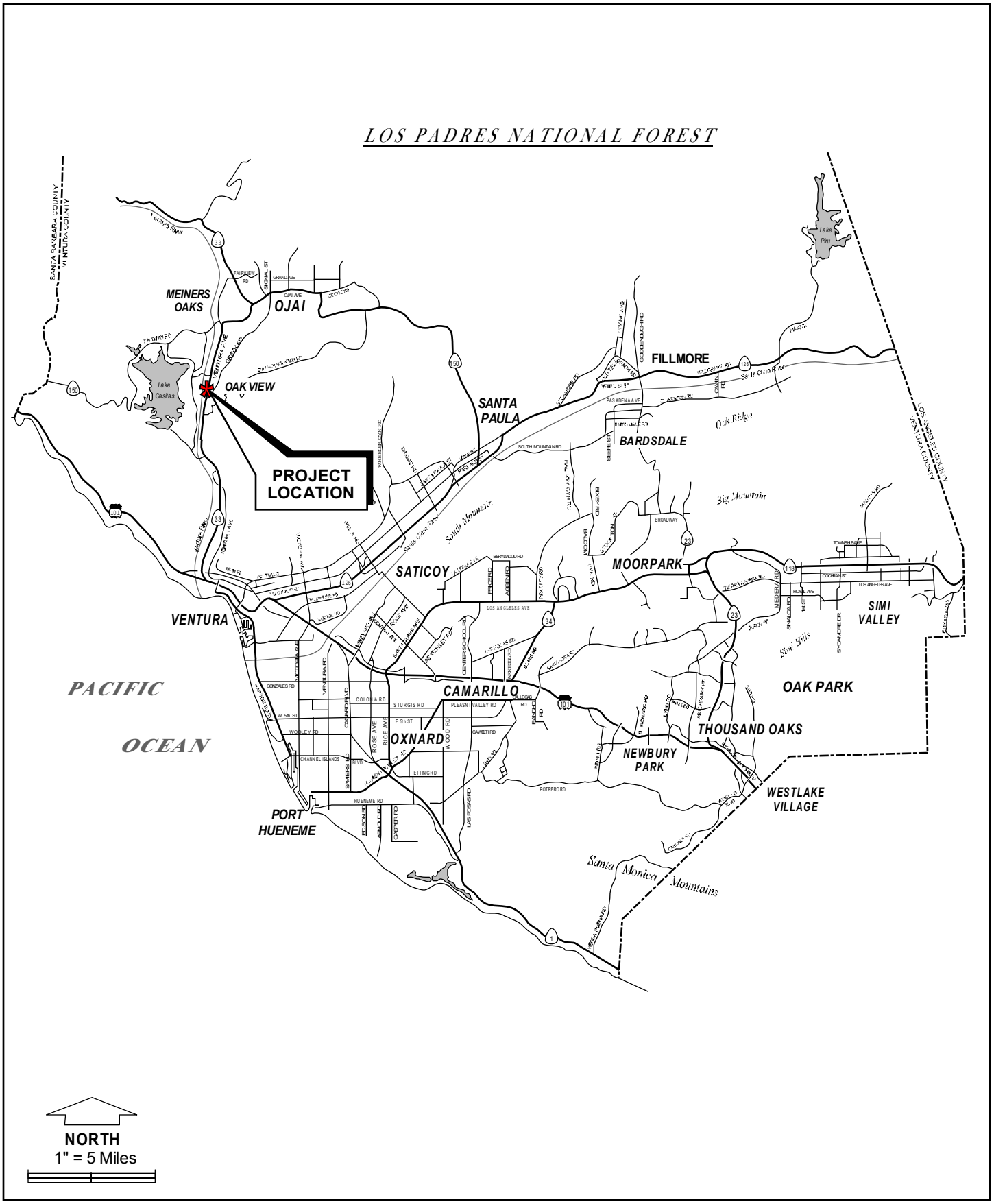
The topography of San Antonio Creek would be restored to near pre-project conditions. Erosion control fabric and straw or coir wattles would be used as needed to stabilize the creek banks. The streambed and banks would be planted with native riparian species in compliance with regulatory permits.

2.3 REQUIRED PERMITS

Work within San Antonio Creek would require the following permits and/or agency consultation:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Section 404 Permit);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (Section 7 Consultation);
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Section 401 Water Quality Certification);
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Section 402 Construction Stormwater General Permit and Waste Discharge Requirement); and
- California Department of Fish and Game (Section 1600 et. seq., Streambed Alteration Agreement).

April 2009
Project No. 0802-2801



padre associates, inc.
ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

Ojai Valley Trail Bridge

REGIONAL MAP
FIGURE 1

April 2009
Project No. 0802-2801

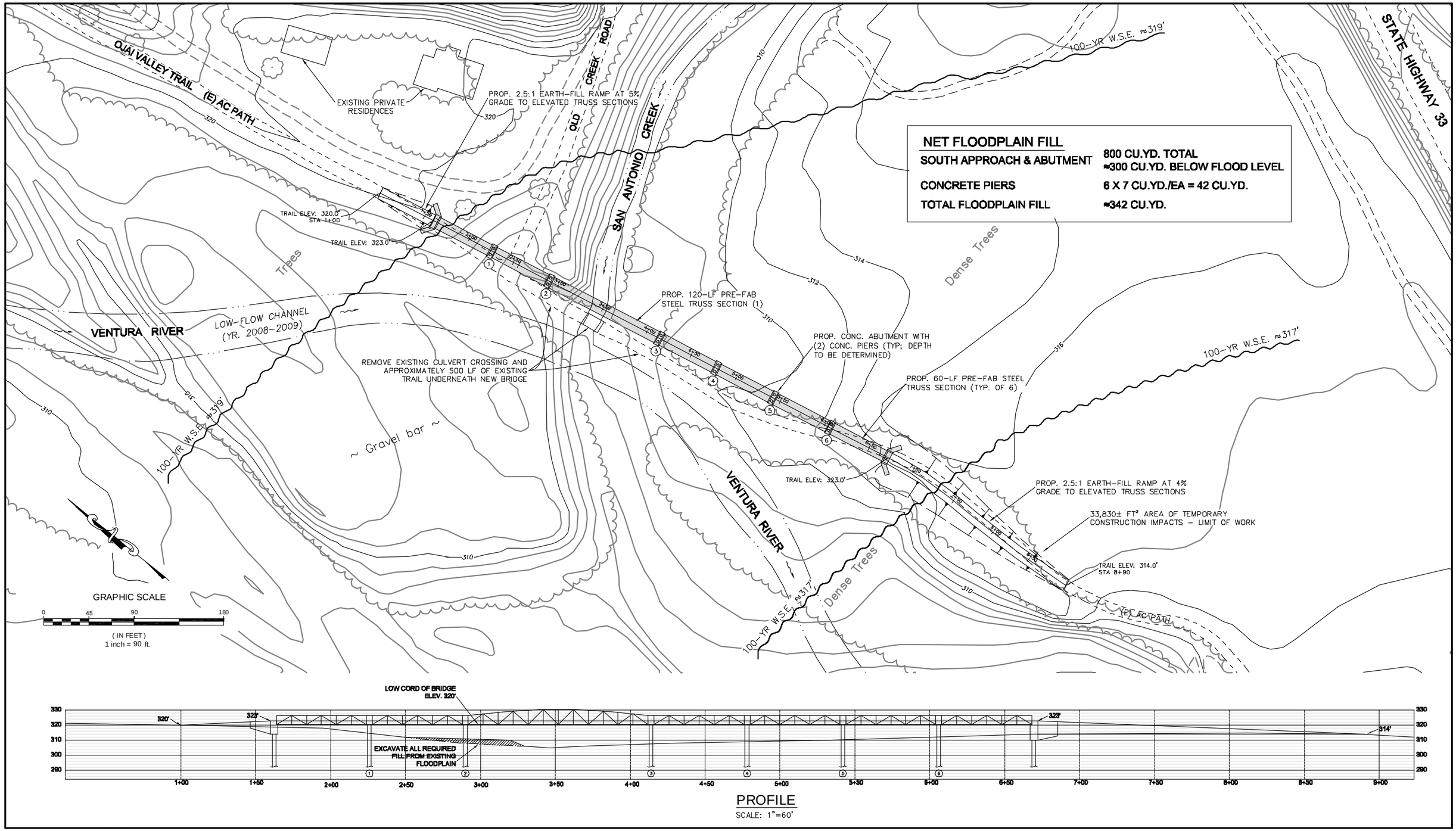
padre associates, inc.
ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

Ojai Valley Trail Bridge

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PROJECT SITE
FIGURE 2

Back of Figure 2

Exhibit 5: Mitigated Negative Declaration and Notice of Declaration



SOURCE: Questa Engineering

padre associates, inc.
ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

Ojai Valley Trail Bridge

CONCEPTUAL BRIDGE DESIGN
FIGURE 3

Back of Figure 3

January 2009
Project no. 0802-2801

a. View of eroded Ojai Valley Trail south of the creek crossing

b. View of Ojai Valley Trail at San Antonio Creek crossing

c. View of the existing culverts at San Antonio Creek

d. View of site from Santa Ana Road (zoomed in)

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS
FIGURE 4

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a. Example of Potential Bridge Design

b. Existing Ojai Valley Trail bridge at Canada Larga

BRIDGE DESIGN COMPARISON
FIGURE 5

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3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The analysis of potential impacts is consistent with methodology and impact threshold criteria presented in the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (Ventura County, 2008). Impact analysis is organized by environmental topic (e.g., land use, air quality, water resources, etc.). The determinations of significance for project-level and cumulative impacts are summarized in the Initial Study Checklist, which is attached to this document. Cumulative impacts were assessed to determine if the project's incremental contribution would be considerable, such that an environmental impact report would be required. Cumulative impacts were considered significant if project-specific impacts would be significant.

ISSUE 1: GENERAL PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS AND POLICIES

The lead agency is the Ventura County General Services Agency and the project is located within County jurisdiction. Therefore, the proposed project is subject to Ventura County policies.

Setting. The Ventura County General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs (updated 2005), establishes a body of environmental goals, policies, and programs that are intended to protect the environment through preservation or conservation of resources, avoidance of hazards, preservation of existing land uses, and preservation of public facility service levels.

Significance Thresholds. According to the County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, a project would have a significant impact if it would be inconsistent with a specific environmental policy (emphasis added) established in the Ventura County General Plan.

Impacts (PS-M). Consistency with the policies of the Ventura County General Plan is discussed in Table 1 below. The proposed project may be inconsistent with policies of the Ventura County General Plan relating to wetlands.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures have been provided (see Issue 6) that would render the project consistent with General Plan policies.

Table 1. Summary of General Plan Policy Consistency

Policy	Consistency Determination
RESOURCES - General Goals, Policies and Programs	
1.1.2-1: Evaluate impacts in compliance with CEQA	Consistent: This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for the project in compliance with CEQA
1.1.2-2: Significant impacts shall be mitigated	Consistent: mitigation is provided for all significant impacts
Air Quality	
All	Consistent: impacts have been identified and mitigation measures provided (see Issue 3), the project is not subject to APCD permit authority

Table 1. Continued

Policy	Consistency Determination
Water Resources	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve land development, and would not generate long-term demand for potable water or require new wells
Mineral Resources	
1.4.2-1 through –5	Consistent: the project does not involve mineral or petroleum extraction/production
1.4.2-6: Evaluate mineral resource impacts in compliance with CEQA	Consistent: see Issue 5 in the Initial Study
1.4.2-7 through –9	Consistent: the project would not affect a mineral resource area (see Issue 5)
Biological Resources	
1.5.2-1: Evaluate biological impacts of discretionary development	Consistent: see Issue 6 in the Initial Study
1.5.2-2: Mitigate significant biological impacts	Consistent: see Issue 6 in the Initial Study
1.5.2-3: Evaluate impacts to wetland habitat, discretionary development that would have a significant impact on a significant wetland habitat shall be prohibited	Potentially inconsistent: due to the nature of the project, wetlands cannot be entirely avoided during construction
1.5.2-4: Discretionary development shall be sited a minimum of 100 feet from significant wetland habitats	Potentially inconsistent: due to the nature of the project, wetlands cannot be entirely avoided during construction
1.5.2-5: The California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Audubon Society and California Native Plant Society shall be consulted when discretionary development may significantly impact biological resources	Consistent: these organizations will be provided the opportunity to comment on the draft MND
1.5.2-6:Road and floodplain improvements shall incorporate all feasible measures to accommodate wildlife movement	Consistent: wildlife movement is expected to be improved (see Issue 6d)
Farmland Resources	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve loss of farmland, hillside agricultural grading or development adjacent to agricultural-designated lands (see Issue 7)

Table 1. Continued

Policy	Consistency Determination
Scenic Resources	
1.7.1-1: Discretionary development that would significantly degrade visual resources shall be prohibited	Consistent: see Issue 8 in the Initial Study
1.7.2-3(2): Scenic Highway Areas-Removal, damaging or destruction of a protected tree shall be in compliance with the County's Tree Protection Regulations	Consistent: the project site is partially visible from Santa Ana Road, an eligible County scenic highway, the project would comply with the County Tree Protection Regulations
Paleontological and Cultural Resources	
1.8.2-1: Evaluate paleontological and cultural resources impacts of discretionary development	Consistent: impacts to these resources have been evaluated, see Issues 9 and 10 in the Initial Study
All others	Consistent: no resources were found near the site; however, potential impacts were identified and mitigation provided
Energy Resources	
All	Consistent: the project would not consume energy
Coastal Beaches and Sand Dunes	
All	Consistent: the project would not affect beaches or sand dunes, or involve shoreline structures or mining (see Issue 12 of the Initial Study)
HAZARDS – General Goals, Policies & Programs	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any development, including habitable structures, essential facilities or hazardous facilities
Fault Rupture	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any habitable structures, does not cross any active faults and is not located in fault hazard area (see Issue 13a)
Ground Shaking	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any habitable structures (see Issue 13b)
Tsunami	
All	Consistent: the proposed project is not located in a tsunami hazard area (see Issue 13c)
Seiche	
All	Consistent: the proposed project is not located in a seiche hazard area (see Issue 13d)

Table 1. Continued

Policy	Consistency Determination
Liquefaction	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any essential facilities, special occupancy structures or hazardous facilities (see Issue 13e)
Subsidence	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve well drilling, any public safety or emergency services facilities or habitable structures (see Issue 14a)
Expansive Soils	
All	Consistent: expansive soils have not been identified, no buildings are proposed (see Issue 14b)
Landslides/Mudslides	
All	Consistent: the project would not be located in a landslide/mudslide hazard area or hillside areas (see Issue 14c)
Transportation Related Hazards	
All	Consistent: the project is not located near any airport, airstrip or agricultural landing field (see Issue 16)
Coastal Wave and Beach Erosion Hazards	
All	Consistent: the project is not located on the coast
Flood Hazards	
All	Consistent: the project is located within the floodway, and would result in about 342 cubic yards of fill within the floodplain. However, an equivalent amount of earth material would be removed, such that no net change in fill or change in flood elevation would occur (see Issue 15)
Inundation from Dam Failure	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any dams
Fire Hazard	
All	Consistent: the project is not located in a fire hazard area and does not involve any development, and does not require a fire water supply (see Issue 17)
Hazardous Materials and Waste	
All	Consistent: the project would not generate or utilize hazardous materials (excluding vehicle fuels and lubricants), and would not be constructed at a waste site (see Issue 18)
Noise	
All	Consistent: the project is not a noise sensitive use or a noise generator, and complies with the construction noise thresholds (see Issue 19)
LAND USE - General Goals, Land Use Designations, Population & Housing, Employment	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any change in land use
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES – General Goals, Policies and Programs	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any development or annexation

Table 1. Continued

Policy	Consistency Determination
Transportation/Circulation	
All	Consistent: the project would not generate any traffic (except during construction) or adversely affect level of service (see Issue 22)
Water Supply Facilities	
All	Consistent: the project would not require a water supply (except during construction), see Issue 23
Waste Treatment and Disposal Facilities	
All	Consistent: the project would not generate wastewater or solid waste (see Issue 24)
Public Utilities	
All	Consistent: the project would not require any public utilities (see Issue 25)
Flood Control and Drainage Facilities	
All	Consistent: the project would not require any flood control or drainage facilities (see Issue 26)
Law Enforcement and Emergency Services	
All	Consistent: the project would not require any law enforcement or emergency services (see Issue 27)
Fire Protection	
All	Consistent: the project would not require any fire protection services (see Issue 28)
Education and Library Facilities and Services	
All	Consistent: the project would not require any education or library services (see Issue 29)
Parks and Recreation	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve land development, and would not generate any demand for recreational facilities and would not affect existing facilities (see Issue 30)
Other Public Buildings and Grounds	
All	Consistent: the project does not involve any public buildings or grounds

ISSUE 2: LAND USE (PLANNING)

Part 2.a Community Character

Setting. The project site is located within the OVT right-of-way (APN 061-0-150-18) and would involve adjacent parcels to the west (APN 061-0-150-01) and east (APN 061-0-150-28). Each of these parcels is zoned as Open Space, 20 acre minimum parcel size (OS-20ac). The community of Casitas Springs is located approximately 0.3 miles to the south, and the community of Oak View is located approximately 0.5 miles to the north.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact to community character if it would disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project is intended to improve fish passage and provide a safe all-weather crossing for the OVT at San Antonio Creek. The proposed project would not conflict with existing land uses or zoning designations for the site. Additionally, the project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of surrounding uses. As such, no impacts to community character would occur.

Part 2.b Housing

Setting. Existing residential development in the area primarily consists of single-family residences within the adjacent communities of Casitas Springs and Oak View. The nearest residence is located approximately 250 feet north-northeast of the existing OVT creek crossing culverts, off Old Creek Road.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact on housing if it would cause forced removal of four or more existing housing units or create substantial demand for new housing.

Impacts (NI). The project would not involve the removal of any existing housing. However, any project that would involve construction has the potential to generate a demand for construction worker housing. The construction phase of the project is not expected to exceed 4 months. The County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines indicate that short-term construction (defined as 18 months or less in duration) is not expected to generate a substantial demand for housing, as construction services are likely to be supplied by existing construction workers within the County. No permanent employment or housing needs would be generated by the project; therefore, no impacts to housing would occur.

Part 2.c Growth Inducement

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would induce substantial growth. The project would have the potential to induce substantial growth if it would eliminate or remove an impediment to growth in the area. This includes both physical impediments (lack of roads, flood control facilities, sewers, water lines, etc.) and policy impediments (e.g., existing land use and zoning designations, General Plan policies, etc.).

Impacts (NI). The proposed project does not include residential units or commercial land uses that may generate employment opportunities; therefore, it would not directly increase population levels, or create a demand for goods or services. The proposed project would replace an existing recreational trail creek crossing, and would not involve expansion of any service infrastructure. The project would not improve existing flood protection for residences or remove any parcels from the 100 year floodplain that may become developable.

Further, the project would not require the amendment of existing land use designations, zoning designations, General Plan policies, ordinances, development guidelines, or any other policies that would allow for increased development of the area. Considering the above, the project would not be growth inducing.

ISSUE 3: AIR QUALITY

Setting. Ventura County is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin. The topography and climate of Southern California combine to make the basin an area of high air pollution potential. Ozone and particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM_{10}) are of particular interest in Ventura County because State air quality standards for these pollutants are regularly exceeded. The air quality of Ventura County is monitored by a network of six stations, operated by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) and the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (APCD). The Ojai monitoring station is the nearest station to the project site, located approximately 6.3 miles to the northeast.

Table 2 lists the monitored maximum concentrations and number of violations of air quality standards for the years 2006 through 2008. As shown in Table 2, ozone concentrations monitored at the Ojai station periodically exceeded the State 1-hour standard and State 8-hour ozone standards from 2006 through 2008. PM_{10} concentrations exceeded the State 24-hour standard at the Ojai station during four sampling events from 2006 through 2008.

Significance Thresholds. The APCD has prepared Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (2003) for the preparation of air quality impact analyses. The Guidelines indicate that projects within the Ojai Planning Area would have a significant impact on the environment if they would:

- Result in daily emissions exceeding 5 pounds of reactive organic compounds (ROC) or oxides of nitrogen (NO_x);
- Cause a violation or make a substantial contribution to a violation of an ambient air quality standard;
- Directly or indirectly cause the existing population to exceed the population forecasts in the most recently adopted AQMP;
- Be inconsistent with the Ventura County Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and emit greater than 2 pounds per day ROC or NO_x.

Due to the temporary, short-term nature of construction emissions, the APCD does not apply the quantitative emissions thresholds for ROC and NO_X to construction activities. The APCD does require that emission reduction measures be implemented during construction to reduce exhaust emissions and fugitive dust generation.

Part 3.a Regional

Impacts (PS-M). Emissions would be generated during the construction phase by heavy equipment and vehicles. This analysis is based on a peak construction day, consisting of construction of bridge approaches and pier footings. Equipment assumed to be operating during a peak construction day includes one dozer, one wheeled loader, one tracked excavator and several heavy-duty trucks. Vehicle one-way trips for a peak construction day were assumed to be 40 for heavy-duty trucks and 20 for light-duty trucks and autos (worker transportation). A one-way trip length of 15 miles was used in the calculations. Construction equipment exhaust emissions were calculated using load factors and emission factors from *Nonroad Engine and Vehicle Emissions Study* (EPA, 1991). Vehicle emissions were calculated using the EMFAC2007 model developed by the Air Resources Board.

Table 2. Air Quality Summary

Parameter	Standard	Year		
		2006	2007	2008
Ozone (O3) – parts per million (Ojai station)				
Maximum 1-hour concentration monitored (ppm)		0.111	0.093	0.093
Number of days exceeding State standard	0.095 ppm	6	0	0
Maximum 8-hour concentration monitored (ppm)		0.100	0.085	0.084
Number of days exceeding State 8-hour standard	0.070 ppm	38	16	29
Particulate Matter less than 10 microns (PM10) – micrograms per cubic meter (Ojai)				
Maximum sample ($\mu g/m^3$)		47.0	98.7	60.7
Number of samples exceeding State standard	50 $\mu g/m^3$	0	3	1
Number of samples exceeding Federal standard	150 $\mu g/m^3$	0	0	0

Peak day construction emissions would be 118.8 pounds NO_X and 8.0 pounds ROC. As such, NO_X emissions during peak construction periods would exceed the 5 pounds per day threshold established by the APCD. However, due to the temporary, short-term nature of construction emissions, the APCD does not apply the quantitative emissions thresholds for ROC and NO_X to construction activities. The APCD does require that emission reduction measures be implemented during construction to reduce exhaust emissions and fugitive dust generation.

Projects that cause local populations to exceed population forecasts in the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) are considered inconsistent with the AQMP, as exceeding population forecasts can result in the generation of emissions beyond those which have been projected in the AQMP. The proposed project would not directly or indirectly result in population growth, and therefore would not cause population forecasts in the AQMP to be exceeded. As such, the project would be consistent with the AQMP.

The combustion of diesel fuel in truck engines (as well as other internal combustion engines) produces exhaust containing a number of compounds that have been identified as hazardous air pollutants by EPA and toxic air contaminants by the ARB. Particulate matter (PM) from diesel exhaust has recently been identified as a toxic air contaminant, which has prompted ARB to develop a Final Risk Reduction Plan (released October 2000) for exposure to diesel PM. Based on ARB Resolution 00-30, full implementation of emission reduction measures recommended in the Final Risk Reduction Plan would result in a 75 percent reduction in the diesel PM Statewide inventory and the associated cancer risk by 2010, and an 85 percent reduction by 2020 in the diesel PM inventory and potential cancer risk.

Construction of the proposed project would involve diesel exhaust emissions from heavy equipment and heavy-duty trucks as close as 100 feet from residences (Old Creek Road). However, these residences are currently exposed to diesel exhaust emissions from traffic on State Route 33, located within 850 feet of the residences. The proposed project would have a small, short-term contribution to existing diesel PM emissions, and impacts are considered less than significant.

Green House Gas Emissions and Global Climate Change. In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 and the Governor signed it into law. AB 32 focuses on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in California. GHG as defined under AB 32 include: water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. AB 32 requires the ARB, the State agency charged with regulating statewide air quality, to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990 by 2020. In addition, two State-level Executive Orders have been enacted by the Governor (Executive Order S-3-05, signed June 1, 2005, and Executive Order S-01-07, signed January 18, 2007) that mandate reductions in GHG emissions.

In response to AB 32 and because of the lack of guidance on CEQA analysis from the state, the Association of Environmental Professionals published a white paper summarizing the legal background, legislative history and alternative approaches to addressing GHG emissions have been established. However, no thresholds of significance for GHG or global climate change have been adopted.

Construction of the proposed project would involve the combustion of diesel fuel and gasoline and would generate GHG emissions. Due to the lack of significance thresholds, a determination of the project's impact on regional, statewide, or continental resources of concern affected by global climate change (i.e., regional water supply and hydrology, plant and wildlife species range expansions or contractions, Sierra snowpack, extent of polar ice caps, sea level rise, etc.) would be speculative.

Mitigation. Air emissions reduction measures recommended by the Ventura County APCD Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (revised 2003) shall be incorporated into the project including:

- The area disturbed by clearing, grading, earth moving, or excavation operations shall be minimized to prevent excessive amounts of dust.
- Pre-grading/excavation activities shall include watering the area to be graded or excavated before commencement of grading or excavation operations. Application of water (preferably reclaimed, if available) should penetrate sufficiently to minimize fugitive dust during grading activities.
- All trucks shall be required to cover their loads as required by California Vehicle Code §23114.
- All graded and excavated material, exposed soil areas, and active portions of the construction site, including unpaved on-site roadways, shall be treated to prevent fugitive dust. Treatment shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, periodic watering, application of environmentally-safe soil stabilization materials, and/or roll-compaction as appropriate. Watering shall be done as often as necessary and reclaimed water shall be used whenever possible.

- Graded and/or excavated inactive areas of the construction site shall be monitored at least weekly for dust stabilization. Soil stabilization methods, such as water and roll-compaction, and environmentally-safe dust control materials, shall be periodically applied to portions of the construction site that are inactive for over four days. If no further grading or excavation operations are planned for the area, the area shall be seeded and watered until plant growth is evident, or periodically treated with environmentally-safe dust suppressants, to prevent excessive fugitive dust.
- Signs shall be posted on-site limiting traffic to 15 miles per hour or less.
- During periods of high winds (i.e., wind speed sufficient to cause fugitive dust to impact adjacent properties), all clearing, grading, earth moving, and excavation operations shall be curtailed to the degree necessary to prevent fugitive dust created by on-site activities and operations from being a nuisance or hazard, either off-site or on-site. The site superintendent/supervisor shall use his/her discretion in conjunction with the APCD in determining when winds are excessive.
- Adjacent streets and roads shall be swept at least once per day, preferably at the end of the day, if visible soil material is carried over to adjacent streets and roads.
- Personnel involved in grading operations, including contractors and subcontractors, shall be advised to wear respiratory protection in accordance with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health regulations.
- Material stockpiles shall be enclosed, covered, stabilized, or otherwise treated as needed to prevent blowing fugitive dust off-site.
- All project construction and site preparation operations shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable Ventura County APCD Rules and Regulations with emphasis on Rule 50 (Opacity), Rule 51 (Nuisance), Rule 55 (Fugitive Dust) and Rule 10 (Permits Required).

The above emission reduction measures would reduce dust impacts to a less than significant level.

Part 3.b Local

Impacts (LS). State 1-hour ambient standards for carbon monoxide (CO) are sometimes exceeded at urban roadway intersections during times of peak traffic congestion. These localized areas are sometimes called CO “hotspots”. Ambient CO levels in the region are low due to the use of oxygenated fuels, and low population density. The project site is relatively isolated from major roadways and associated vehicle emissions. The project would generate roadway traffic only during construction, when workers and trucks would be traveling to and from the project site. The number of daily vehicle trips that would be generated during construction would not add substantially to local traffic volumes. Considering the above, the project would not be expected to create or contribute substantially to the violation of CO standards.

Fugitive dust would be generated by the operation of heavy equipment and vehicles during the excavation and grading. Dust generation from these activities would be considered a significant impact if APCD Rule 51 is violated. Rule 51 states "A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or the public or which endangers the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public or which cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property." As most construction work would involve moist soils (streambed sediments), fugitive dust is not expected to be considered a nuisance.

ISSUE 4: WATER RESOURCES

Groundwater. The project site is located within the Upper Sub-basin of the Ventura River Valley Groundwater Basin. The surface area of the sub-basin is 7,410 acres. The Upper Ventura River Sub-basin is bounded on the northeast by the Lower Ojai Valley Sub-basin, on the south by the Lower Ventura River sub-basin and elsewhere by the impermeable rock of the Santa Ynez Mountains. The valley is drained by Coyote Creek, Matilija Creek, San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River. Average annual precipitation ranges from 14 to 24 inches (California Department of Water Resources, 2004).

Groundwater is found in alluvium of Holocene and Pleistocene age. Groundwater in the basin is unconfined, and the estimated average specific yield of the basin is 8 percent. The basin is recharged by percolation of Ventura River water, precipitation to the valley floor, and irrigation return flow. The total storage capacity is estimated at 35,000 acre-feet, and the amount of groundwater in storage is unknown.

The Ventura River Hydrologic Unit is considered to support beneficial uses. Beneficial uses established in the Water Quality Control Plan (LARWQCB, 1994) for groundwater in the Upper Ventura River Valley Sub-basin are municipal water supply (potential), industrial service water supply, industrial process water supply, and agricultural water supply. The groundwaters of the Upper Ventura River Valley Sub-basin are not considered overdrafted.

Surface Water. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Regional Board) has jurisdiction over waters between Rincon Point (at the western boundary of Ventura County) and the eastern Los Angeles County line. The Regional Board has developed a Water Quality Control Plan, or "Basin Plan", to protect the quality of surface and groundwaters of the region. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses of waters within the region, sets narrative and numerical water quality objectives to protect beneficial uses, and describes implementation programs intended to meet the Basin Plan objectives.

Surface flow in San Antonio Creek is typically less than one cfs during the late spring and summer, and averages about 3 cfs during the fall and winter. The most recent peak flow data available indicates a flow of 2,803 cfs on January 4, 2008 at State Route 33. The highest flow recorded was 16,200 cfs on January 25, 1969.

Beneficial uses established in the Water Quality Control Plan (RWQCB, 1994) for surface water in San Antonio Creek are municipal water supply, industrial service water supply, agricultural water supply, groundwater recharge, water contact recreation, non-water contact recreation, warm freshwater habitat, cold freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat, rare species habitat, migratory habitat, spawning habitat and wetlands.

San Antonio Creek is considered impaired under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, due to elevated nitrogen levels (SWRCB, 2007). A water body is impaired when data indicate that adopted water quality objectives are continually exceeded or that beneficial uses are not protected.

Part 4.a Groundwater Quantity

Setting. The adjacent community of Casitas Springs relies on local groundwater and Lake Casitas for drinking water. Much of the water stored in Lake Casitas is diverted surface water from the Ventura River.

Significance Thresholds. Any project that would directly or indirectly decrease, either individually or cumulatively, the net quantity of groundwater in an over-drafted aquifer would be considered to have a potentially significant impact.

Impacts (LS). Groundwater may be encountered during excavation for the bridge abutments and/or pier foundations. Such groundwater would be discharged to surface waters in accordance with a construction-related dewatering National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to be obtained for the project. Loss of groundwater would be limited to small amounts of evaporation during handling.

Once completed, the project would not require water. Small amounts of water may be used during the construction period for dust control and slope compaction. This water may be obtained from dewatering excavations or from local fire hydrants (Casitas Municipal Water District). However, the amount of water used for construction would be very small (less than 0.2 acre-feet) and would not affect groundwater supplies. Overall, impacts to groundwater quantity would be less than significant.

Part 4.b Groundwater Quality

Setting. Groundwater in the Upper Ventura River Valley Sub-basin is high in calcium bicarbonate. Water from 18 public supply wells has an average TDS content of 706 mg/L in the basin with a range from 500 to 1240 mg/L (California Department of Water Resources, 2004).

Significance Thresholds. Any land use proposal that would individually or cumulatively degrade the quality of groundwater and cause groundwater to fail to meet groundwater quality objectives set by the LARWQCB would be considered to have a potentially significant impact.

Impacts (PS-M). Inadvertent spills of fuel and lubricants during project construction may percolate to the underlying aquifer and may adversely affect groundwater quality.

Mitigation. The project would require coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (Water Quality Order 99-08-DWQ). As required by the conditions of the General Permit, a Storm Water Quality Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared, which would include best management practices to be implemented and a monitoring program. The intent of the SWPPP would be to prevent construction pollutants from contacting storm water and prevent products of erosion from moving off-site into receiving waters.

The following Best Management Practices shall be incorporated into the SWPPP to minimize potential water quality, hydraulic hazards and hazardous materials impacts. These impacts would be mitigated to a less than significant level with the implementation of these measures.

- All ground disturbance shall be limited to the dry season or periods when rainfall is not predicted, to minimize erosion and sediment transport to surface waters;
- Disturbed areas where work has been completed shall be stabilized or re-vegetated prior to the start of the rainy season;
- Straw wattles (or equivalent measures) shall be used to trap suspended sediment downstream of the project site during creation and destruction of the diversion berm;
- Groundwater discharged to surface waters shall be allowed to settle to reduce suspended sediment, prior to such discharge;
- Impacts to vegetation within and adjacent to the project site shall be minimized. The work area shall be flagged to identify its limits prior to clearing and grubbing. Vegetation shall not be removed or intentionally damaged beyond these limits.
- Construction materials and soil piles shall be placed in designated areas where they could not enter stream flow due to spillage or erosion.
- Waste and debris generated during construction shall be stored in designated waste collection areas and containers away from watercourses, and shall be disposed of regularly.
- All fueling of heavy equipment shall occur in a designated area removed from San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River, such that any spillage would not enter surface waters. The designated area shall include a drain pan or drop cloth and absorbent materials to clean up spills.
- Vehicles and equipment shall be maintained properly to prevent leakage of hydrocarbons and coolant, and shall be examined for leaks on a daily basis. All maintenance shall occur in a designated offsite area. The designated area shall include a drain pan or drop cloth and absorbent materials to clean up spills.

- Any accidental spill of hydrocarbons or coolant that may occur on the construction site shall be cleaned immediately. Absorbent materials shall be maintained on the construction site for this purpose. The Regional Board shall be notified immediately in the event of an accidental spill to ensure proper clean up and disposal of waste.

Mitigation measures provided above would reduce construction-related water quality impacts to a level of less than significant.

Part 4.c Surface Water Quantity

Setting. The proposed bridge would be constructed within San Antonio Creek, at its confluence with the Ventura River. The hydrology of the Ventura River is altered by four surface water diversions including the Robles diversion (to Lake Casitas), Foster Park diversion (City of Ventura potable water), Live Oak diversion and Rancho Matilija diversion. In addition, treated municipal wastewater is discharged to the Ventura River about 3 miles downstream of the project site.

Significance Thresholds. Any of the following effects would be considered a significant impact:

- Increase the net utilization of surface water in a hydrologic unit that is overdrafted or adversely affect an overdrafted groundwater basin;
- Cause a hydrologic unit to become overdrafted;
- Increase the net utilization of surface water in areas where the condition of the hydrologic unit is unknown.

Impacts (NI). Construction would occur during the dry season, and any surface water present would be diverted around the work area using an earthen berm. No surface water would be removed from the streambed. Groundwater encountered during excavation (if any) would be removed from the work area and discharged back into San Antonio Creek or Ventura River, or some may be used for dust suppression. Water used for construction could also be obtained from potable sources (fire hydrant, or similar source), but not surface water. No project-related loss of surface water is anticipated.

Part 4.d Surface Water Quality

Setting. The project would require coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (Water Quality Order 99-08-DWQ). As required by the conditions of the General Permit, a Storm Water Quality Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared, which would include best management practices to be implemented and a monitoring program. The intent of the SWPPP would be to prevent construction-related pollutants from contacting surface water and prevent products of erosion from moving off-site into receiving waters.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would individually or cumulatively degrade the quality of surface water and cause it to fail to meet surface water quality objectives for a hydrologic unit defined in the Water Quality Control Plan developed by LARWQCB (1994).

Impacts (PS-M). Stream diversion and use of heavy equipment within San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River would result in temporary increases in turbidity and TDS levels. In addition, inadvertent spills of fuel and lubricants during project construction may enter into surface waters when the temporary stream diversion is removed.

Mitigation. Mitigation measures are provided in Part 4.b, and would reduce construction-related water quality impacts to a level of less than significant.

ISSUE 5: MINERAL RESOURCES

Part 5.a Aggregate Resources

Setting. Aggregate resources are defined as construction grade sand and gravel. The project site is located in an area designated as MRZ-3a by the State of California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG, 1993). This designation indicates the area may contain significant aggregate deposits. There are no current aggregate mining operations in the project area.

Significance Thresholds. Any project that would directly or indirectly use aggregate products or by-products would have an impact on the demand for aggregate resources. However, no project would have a significant impact because "there is a sufficient amount of aggregate resources to meet local demand for the next 50 years."

Additionally, the project would have a significant impact if it would hamper extraction or access to aggregate resources, by being located in or immediately adjacent to any known aggregate resource area, or adjacent to a primary access road to an existing aggregate production facility.

Impacts (LS). The project site is located within an area that may contain aggregate deposits, but has not been used for aggregate extraction in the recent past. The proposed project would only use a minor amount of aggregate resources, and would not generate any regional demand for aggregate resources or hamper future extraction of aggregate from the area. Therefore, the project would not have a significant impact on aggregate resources.

Part 5.b Petroleum Resources

Setting. Petroleum resources are defined as oil and gas deposits. Known petroleum fields are mapped by the State of California Division Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR). According to DOGGR's Regional Wildcat Maps, the project site is located approximately one mile southeast of the Oak View Oil Field (abandoned). There are no oil production or exploration operations in the immediate project area.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would hamper extraction or access to petroleum resources, by being located in or immediately adjacent to any known petroleum resource area, or adjacent to a principal access road to an existing petroleum production facility.

Impacts (NI). As indicated above, the project site is not located within or directly adjacent to a petroleum resource area or petroleum production facility. Construction activities associated with the project would only use a minor amount of petroleum products for fueling and lubrication, and would not affect the supply of petroleum in the County. In addition, the proposed project would not create a barrier to the extraction of petroleum resources, if discovered at or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not impact petroleum resources.

ISSUE 6: BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The following setting discussion is based on biological field surveys conducted in 2001 for the Route 33 Corridor Study (Casitas Bypass) (Padre Associates, 2002), in 2003 for the Ventura River Bank Protection Upgrade Project EIR (Padre Associates, 2003), in 2005 for the EIR Addendum, in 2007 during construction monitoring for levee improvements (Padre Associates, 2007a), and recent surveys conducted for this project.

Vegetation. Vegetation within the impact area (bridge site and stream diversion work areas) may be described as composed of six plant communities: willow scrub, willow riparian forest, cottonwood-willow riparian forest, freshwater marsh, bare (scoured) and disturbed. A vegetation map is provided as Figure 6. Willow scrub occurs along the margins of the low flow channel, and is dominated by arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) saplings with scattered mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) and giant reed (*Arundo donax*). Willow riparian forest occurs within the San Antonio Creek floodplain further from the low flow channel and is dominated by arroyo willow and giant reed, with occasional red willow (*Salix laevigata*). Cottonwood-willow riparian forest occurs on terraces along the Ventura River and is dominated by black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera* ssp. *trichocarpa*), arroyo willow and red willow. Freshwater marsh is scattered within the low flow channel of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River, and is dominated by watercress (*Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum*) and water speedwell (*Veronica anagallis-aquatica*). Bare (scoured) is a term used to describe portions of the San Antonio Creek and Ventura River floodplains that support only scattered plants due to scouring caused by high flows. Plants found in these areas include mulefat, giant reed, smilo grass (*Piptatherum miliaceum*) and scalebroom (*Lepidospartum squamatum*). Disturbed is a term used to described developed areas including the OVT, unpaved roads and the adjacent rural residential properties. These areas support scattered landscaping plants, weedy species and occasional native shrubs.

Plants. Botanical surveys of the project site were conducted on December 30, 2008 and April 29, 2009 by Padre Associates biologists. A list of vascular plant species observed within the project site is provided as Appendix B. Ninety-four plant species were identified, of which 45 (48 percent) are native species. The high number of non-native species is likely a result of weedy species transported to the site by storm flows, OVT users and adjacent disturbance (levee construction). The only special-status plant species observed during the botanical surveys was southern California black walnut, a plant of limited distribution (CNPS List 4). Several individuals of this species was found within willow riparian forest and cottonwood-willow riparian forest adjacent to, but outside the proposed work area.

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Project No. 0802-2801

padre associates, inc.
ENGINEERS, GEOLOGISTS & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS

Ojai Valley Trail Bridge

VEGETATION MAP
FIGURE 6

Back of Figure 6

Wildlife. The work area currently provides aquatic and upland wildlife habitats, including open water, freshwater marsh, riparian scrub and riparian forest habitats. The adjacent Ventura River provides regional important wildlife habitat and attracts a high diversity of resident and migrant species. Wildlife observed during field surveys conducted by Padre Associates or expected to occur in the project area is presented in Table 3 by taxonomic class. In particular, large numbers of migratory birds utilize surface water in the Ventura River in the project area. A list of wildlife species observed or expected in the vicinity of the project site is provided as Appendix C.

Table 3. Numbers of Wildlife Species Observed or Expected in the Project Area

Animal Group	Observed	Expected
Fish	3 species	13 species
Amphibians	4 species	7 species
Reptiles	3 species	21 species
Birds	81 species	120 species
Mammals	10 species	42 species

Part 6.a Endangered, Threatened and Rare Species

Setting. Based on field surveys, literature research and review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base, listed species in the project vicinity include:

- Southern California steelhead ESU (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*, Federal Endangered);
- California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*, Federal Threatened); and
- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*, Federal and State Endangered).

Two 5-6 inch long rainbow trout (presumed steelhead) were observed in the Ventura River within the pool adjacent to the OVT crossing of San Antonio Creek, during the April 29, 2009 field survey. Steelhead have also been documented within San Antonio Creek, including several found in a pool by the Soule Park Golf Course in 2001 (7 miles upstream of the project site).

California red-legged frog was found in San Antonio Creek near the State Route 33 bridge in 2001 (Padre Associates, 2002), and is expected to occur at the project site.

A small number of least Bell's vireo attempt to breed on the lower Ventura River in some years (Fugro West 1995, URS 2000, Padre Associates 2002). A pair was found in 1993 approximately 7 miles downstream, and one male and two juveniles were found in 1995 approximately 8 miles downstream of the project site (near the Main Street bridge). Two nests were found within the River corridor in 2003, in the project area (Jim Greaves, 2003, personal communication). However, successful breeding has not been documented, probably due to brood parasitism by brown-headed cowbird.

Field surveys for least Bell's vireo in recent years has been concentrated in the Casitas Springs area, approximately 0.5 miles south of the project site. Two tape-playback surveys were conducted by Jim Greaves along the Ventura River in Casitas Springs in 2001, a recognized authority on least Bell's vireo, with negative results (Padre Associates, 2002). This species was also not observed during field surveys conducted along the Ventura River near the project site in 2007 (Padre Associates, 2007a), and recent surveys (April 2009) at Foster Park. Protocol surveys underway in 2009 between the mouth of the River and Stanley Avenue detected a pair of least Bell's vireo near the Main Street bridge. Overall, the probability of least Bell's vireo breeding in the project area is considered low.

Significance Thresholds. Project impacts would be considered significant if they would substantially affect a rare, threatened, or endangered species of animal or plant, or habitat of the species.

Impacts (PS-M). Bridge construction would require temporary diversion of surface flow from the current channel to a pipe (San Antonio Creek) or new channel (Ventura River). This activity may result in stranding of southern California steelhead and California red-legged frog (tadpoles). Construction activities within/adjacent to surface water may also result in mortality of adult California red-legged frogs, and elevated turbidity and suspended sediment that may adversely affect listed fish species.

Although unlikely, least Bell's vireo may occur in the project area, and vegetation clearing required for bridge construction and stream diversion may adversely affect foraging and breeding by this species.

Mitigation. The following measures shall be incorporated into the project and fully implemented to prevent significant impacts to listed species and their habitat.

- All construction work affecting surface waters shall be conducted during the dry season (April 1 to October 1) when steelhead are less likely to be present.
- A mitigation and monitoring plan shall be developed in coordination with regulatory agencies (Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game), with the goal to replace wetlands, aquatic and riparian habitat, and oak trees removed during construction.
- The mitigation plan shall be fully implemented, and monitored and maintained to ensure success.
- A pre-construction survey(s) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of listed wildlife species in the immediate project area. <u>These surveys shall include protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo.</u>
- A qualified biologist shall monitor construction activities on a periodic basis and survey for listed species.
- If active least Bell's vireo nests are found in the project area during the pre-construction survey or during monitoring, construction activities shall be postponed or re-directed near active nests, until the young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.

- If California red-legged frog is found within the work area during construction, they shall be relocated by a qualified biologist under the authorization of a project-specific Biological Opinion.
- If large trout (presumed steelhead) are found during the pre-construction survey, steelhead shall be coaxed into moving out of the work area under the authorization of a project-specific Biological Opinion.
- Existing surface flow in San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River shall be diverted prior to excavation or other heavy equipment activity as needed to minimize use of heavy equipment in surface water.
- Surface water shall not be diverted until the diversion berm is completed and a clear flow path for the water has been established.
- Qualified biologists shall be present during flow diversion activities, and rescue stranded fish and California red-legged frog tadpoles under the authorization of a project-specific Biological Opinion, and relocate them to suitable undisturbed habitat.

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce construction-related impacts to listed species to a level of less than significant.

Part 6.b Wetland Habitat

Setting. Definition. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has jurisdiction over waters of the United States (U.S.) under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The limit of jurisdiction in non-tidal waters extends to the ordinary high water (OHW) mark and includes all adjacent wetlands. Waters of the U.S. are defined as:

> "All waters which are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide; including all interstate waters including interstate wetlands, all other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams, mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce."
>
> The Corps and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency define wetlands as:
>
> "Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

Federally jurisdictional wetlands are determined to be present if evidence of each of three criteria are observed (hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology). However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) wetland definition requires that only one of the wetland criteria be present to define a wetland and assumes that wetland hydrology is present if hydric soils or hydrophytic vegetation are present. The County's wetland definition (Ventura County Resource Management Agency, 1988 [updated 2005]) focuses on vegetation and aquatic life that requires saturated or seasonally saturated soils.

Regulatory Jurisdiction. Based on debris lines (indicating high water levels) and topographic contours, the portion of the work area within OHW marks is 2.4 acres. Therefore, 2.4 acres of the work area lies within Corps jurisdiction.

The jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Game under Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code extends to the top of bank, and adjacent riparian vegetation. Approximately 2.6 acres of the work area lies within CDFG jurisdiction.

Hydrophytic (Wetland) Vegetation. The vegetation within the streambed of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River is dominated by hydrophytic species, including riparian scrub, willow scrub, willow riparian forest, cottonwood-willow riparian forest and freshwater marsh. The distribution of this vegetation is shown in Figure 6.

Wetland Hydrology. San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River are typically perennial in the project area. However, flow may not be present in the dry season during drought periods. Surface flow was present in both San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River during the December 30, 2008 and April 29, 2009 field surveys. The subject portion of Ventura River and San Antonio Creek is inundated at a frequency to meet the wetland hydrology criterion of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory, 1987).

Hydric Soils. Due to the composition of the riverbed (cobble), hydric soils were not readily observed.

Wetland Determination. For the purposes of this document, areas that are frequently inundated and support hydrophytic vegetation, are considered Corps-defined wetlands. Approximately 0.23 acres of Corps-defined wetlands occur within the proposed work area. Ventura County-defined wetlands are also present, based on the presence of hydrophytic vegetation and surface water supporting aquatic life. These wetlands are closely associated with the low flow channel; wetlands do not occur in other parts of the wide sand/cobble floodplain.

Significance Thresholds. A significant impact would result from the direct reduction of, or a substantial indirect impact to, a significant Wetland Habitat. Policy 1.5.2.3 of the Ventura County General Plan requires that discretionary development proposed to be located within 300 feet of an intermittent stream or spring must be evaluated by a qualified biologist to determine potential impacts to wetland habitats. The wetlands information provided above was collected and analyzed by qualified biologists with Padre Associates, Inc.

Discretionary development that would result in significant impacts to significant wetland habitats are prohibited unless mitigation measures are adopted that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level. For the purposes of this initial study, significant wetland habitats are defined as performing one or more functions considered as important to the public interest (33 CFR 320.4):

- Wetlands which serve significant natural biological functions, including food chain production, general habitat and nesting, spawning, rearing, and resting sites for aquatic or land species;
- Wetlands set aside for study of the aquatic environment or as sanctuaries or refuges;
- Wetlands the destruction or alteration of which would detrimentally affect natural drainage characteristics, sedimentation patterns, salinity distribution, flushing characteristics, current patterns, or other environmental characteristics;
- Wetlands that are significant in shielding other areas from wave action, erosion, or storm damage. Such wetlands are often associated with barrier beaches, islands, reefs and bars;
- Wetlands which serve as valuable storage areas for storm and flood waters;
- Wetlands which are groundwater discharge areas that maintain minimum baseflows important to aquatic resources and those which are prime natural recharge areas;
- Wetlands which serve significant water purification functions; and,
- Wetlands which are unique in nature or scarce in quantity to the region or local area.

Resource agencies recognize the value of wetlands due to the extremely small area of wetlands remaining in California. However, no threshold has been developed to determine the significance of wetland loss for the purposes of CEQA.

Impacts (PS-M). The proposed project would result in the temporary loss of all 0.23 acres of wetlands within the construction work area. These wetlands are considered a significant wetland habitat for the purposes of General Plan Policy 1.5.2.3, and the proposed project may be considered inconsistent with this policy. The temporary loss of wetlands is considered a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation. Impacts would be mitigated through revegetation of the construction work area with native riparian species (see mitigation measures listed in Part 6.a), resulting in an increase in the quality of wetlands. Overall, mitigation measures provided would reduce impacts to wetlands to a level of less than significant.

Part 6.c Coastal Habitat

Setting. The project site is not located within the Coastal Zone.

Significance Thresholds. According to the State Coastal Act and the County's Local Coastal Program, any direct reduction in habitat area or indirect impact to a coastal habitat could be considered significant.

Impacts (LS). Project-related stream diversion activities could result in water quality degradation (elevated turbidity and suspended sediment levels) in the Ventura River estuary, a regionally important coastal wetland. However, due to the distance between the project site and the estuary (8 river miles), dilution with River water and settling of suspended materials would prevent significant water quality degradation at the Ventura River estuary.

Mitigation. Measures listed in Part 4.b would minimize water quality impacts to coastal resources.

Part 6.d Migration Corridors

Setting. Wildlife migration corridors are generally defined as connections between habitat patches that allow for physical and genetic exchange between otherwise isolated animal populations. Migration corridors may be local such as between foraging and nesting or denning areas, or they may be regional in nature. Migration corridors are not unidirectional access routes; however, reference is usually made to source and receiver areas in discussions of wildlife movement networks. "Habitat linkages" are migration corridors that contain contiguous strips of native vegetation between source and receiver areas. Habitat linkages provide cover and forage sufficient for temporary inhabitation by a variety of ground-dwelling animal species. Wildlife migration corridors are essential to the regional ecology of an area as they provide avenues of genetic exchange and allow animals to access alternative territories as fluctuating dispersal pressures dictate.

The project site is located within San Antonio Creek, which provides a habitat corridor linking the Ojai Valley, eastern Santa Ynez Mountains and the Los Padres National forest to the Ventura River and coastal areas. The site is also located immediately adjacent to the Ventura River, which is a regionally important wildlife corridor. In the project area, the Ventura River floodplain is about 500 feet wide, and provides a patchy to continuous corridor of riparian vegetation which provides cover and foraging habitat for wildlife moving through the area.

Migratory fish (steelhead) utilize the Ventura River and San Antonio Creek as a migratory pathway, and for foraging and spawning. One of the fundamental objectives of the project is to improve steelhead access to San Antonio Creek by removing the existing culverts.

Significance Thresholds. A significant impact to a migration corridor would result if a project would substantially interfere with the use of the corridor by fish or wildlife. This could occur through elimination of native vegetation, erection of physical barriers, or intimidation of fish or wildlife via introduction of noise, light, development, or increased human presence. Any impact that would substantially interfere with the use of a migration corridor is considered significant.

Impacts (LS). The proposed project would not significantly reduce the value of San Antonio Creek or the Ventura River as wildlife movement corridors. Project construction activities would be limited to the immediate vicinity of the OVT crossing and would not substantially restrict wildlife movement through the 500 foot-wide Ventura River floodplain. However, temporary vegetation removal at the site may result in a short-term loss of cover for wildlife moving along San Antonio Creek. The project would not involve substantial barriers, such that wildlife would have access through the project site. Construction work would not occur at night when most wildlife movement occurs. The temporary stream diversion would permit movement of aquatic life through the project site for the duration of the construction period.

In the long term, the project would improve steelhead access to San Antonio Creek, by removing the existing culverts and restoring the natural streambed, which is considered a beneficial impact to fish and wildlife movement. Overall, impacts to migration corridors are considered less than significant.

Part 6.e Locally Important Species and Communities

Setting. Tables 4 and 5 list special-status species reported from the project vicinity, based on field surveys, literature research and review of the California Natural Diversity Data Base.

Significance Thresholds. Project impacts would be considered significant if they would substantially affect a locally important species, or habitat for the species.

Impacts (PS-M). Plants. Excluding oaks, no special-status plants were observed or have the potential to be impacted. Two coast live oaks (one 12", one 10" diameter at breast height) are located near the site of the proposed northern bridge abutment and would be removed. The loss of these protected trees is considered a potentially significant impact.

Fish and Wildlife. Project construction would require temporary diversion of the low flow channel to provide a dry work area. This activity may result in stranding of arroyo chub, and loss of foraging and breeding habitat for southwestern pond turtle and two-striped garter snake. Temporary loss of riparian vegetation associated with project construction would result in the temporary loss of foraging habitat for Cooper's hawk, yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat. Cooper's hawk, yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat may breed in the vicinity, and temporary loss of habitat may reduce breeding opportunities for these species. Impacts to arroyo chub, southwestern pond turtle, two-striped garter snake, Cooper's hawk, yellow warbler and yellow-breasted chat are considered potentially significant.

Birds associated with aquatic habitats (double-crested cormorant, black-crowned night heron, great blue heron, great egret, snowy egret) may forage along the Ventura River in the project area and may be displaced by project-related construction activity. However, no long-term loss of habitat would occur and short-term construction disturbance would not substantially affect foraging success in these species.

Nuttall's woodpecker is likely to occur within willow riparian forest and cottonwood-willow riparian forest in the project area. The project-related short-term loss of 0.5 acres of this habitat is not expected to affect foraging or breeding success in this species.

Northern harrier may forage in riparian forest in the project area. The project-related short-term loss of 0.5 acres of this habitat is not expected to affect foraging or breeding success in this species.

Based on observed guano and urine stains, bats (presumably Yuma myotis) utilize the existing Route 33 bridge as a night roost. However, there are no crevices suitable for a day roost at this bridge, and bat use of the area is expected to be limited to a resting/feeding roost during nighttime foraging. The project would involve the temporary removal of 3.65 acres of bat foraging habitat, which is not expected to affect the local population as this species forages over several miles. The proposed bridge may provide additional bat roosting habitat, but is unlikely to provide adequate crevices or other refuges for bats.

Sensitive Communities. Riparian forests dominated by arroyo willow, red willow and/or black cottonwood are considered rare plant communities by the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base. Project implementation would result in the removal of approximately 0.4 acres of riparian forest, and is considered a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation. The following measures (in combination with measures listed under Part 6.a) shall be incorporated into the project and fully implemented to prevent significant impacts to non-listed special-status species and their habitat.

- A pre-construction survey(s) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine the presence of special-status wildlife species in the immediate project area.
- If southwestern pond turtle and/or two-striped garter snake are found in the project area, qualified biologists shall be present during construction to detect and relocate these species to suitable habitat in areas that would not be affected by construction.
- If nesting migratory birds are found in the project area, construction activities shall be postponed or re-directed near active nests, until the young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.
- If nesting special-status bird species (including raptors) are found in the project area, construction activities shall be postponed or re-directed near active nests, until the young have fledged or the nest is abandoned.

Mitigation measures are provided in Part 6.a to minimize loss of locally important species habitat during construction and replace oak trees and wildlife habitat in the long-term. Overall, these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to locally important species and communities to a level of less than significant.

Table 4. Special-Status Plant Species of the Project Area

Common Name (*Scientific Name*)	Status	Nearest Known Location	Potential to Occur within the Project Impact Area
Miles milkvetch (*Astragalus didymocarpus var. milesianus*)	List 1B	Ojai area (CNDDB, 2009)	Low, suitable habitat not present
Davidson's saltscale (*Atriplex seranana var. davidsonii*)	List 1B	Ojai, 5 miles to the northeast (CNDDB, 2009)	Low, suitable habitat not present
Late-flowered mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii var. vestus*)	List 1B	Kennedy Canyon, 5.7 miles to the north (CNDDB, 2009)	Very low, no suitable habitat present
Mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata ssp. puberula*)	List 1B	Ojai area (CNDDB, 2009)	Low, suitable habitat not present
Southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica*)	List 4	Along San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River, adjacent to the proposed work area	Not found in impact area during botanical surveys
Ojai navarretia (*Navarretia ojainensis*)	List 1B	Creek Road, 3.7 miles to the northeast (CNDDB, 2009)	Low, suitable habitat not present
Peninsular nolina (*Nolina cismontana*)	List 1B	Coyote Creek, 4 miles to the northwest (CNDDB, 2009)	Low, suitable habitat not present
Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)	TPO	Two trees occur within the impact area	Present
Salt Spring checkerbloom (*Sidalcea neomexicana*)	List 2	Oak View, 1 mile to the north (CNDDB, 2009)	Low, suitable habitat not present

List 1B Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere (CNPS)
List 4 Plants of limited distribution (CNPS)
TPO Protected under the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance

Table 5. Special-Status Non-Listed Wildlife Species of the Project Area

Common Name (*Scientific Name*)	Status	Nearest Known Location	Potential to Occur within the Project Impact Area
Fish			
Arroyo chub (*Gila orcuttii*)	CSC	Observed at project site during April 29, 2009 field survey	Present
Reptiles			
Southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*)	SA	Ventura River near Casitas Springs; 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2007a)	High, suitable habitat in impact area, expected to be present
California horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum frontale*)	CSC	Near Robles Diversion canal; 5 miles to the north (CNDDB, 2009)	Very low, no suitable habitat present
Coastal western whiptail (*Cnemidophorus tigris multiscutatus*)	SA	Wheeler Canyon: 9.5 miles to the east (Padre Associates, 2007b)	Very low, no suitable habitat present
Two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*)	CSC	Ventura River, 1.4 miles downstream (Ingamells personal observation, 2008)	High, suitable habitat in impact area, expected to be present

Table 5. Continued

Common Name (*Scientific Name*)	Status	Nearest Known Location	Potential to Occur within the Project Impact Area
San Bernardino ringneck snake (*Diadophis punctatus modestus*)	SA	Fagan Canyon, 13 miles to the east (BonTerra Consultants, 2005)	Very low, no suitable habitat present
Coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgultea*)	CSC	Known from the region	Very low, no suitable habitat present
Birds			
White-faced ibis (*Plegadis chihi*)	CSC (rookery)	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2007a)	Low, species is rare in the region, and does not breed here
Tri-colored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*)	CSC	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2002)	Low, suitable habitat does not occur in close proximity to the project site
Yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*)	CSC	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2002), 1.8 miles downstream at Foster Park (2009)	Moderate, suitable habitat present, but species is uncommon in the area
Yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*)	CSC	Ventura River, between Foster Park and Main Street bridge, including project area (Hunt 1991)	Moderate, suitable habitat present, but species is rare in area
Double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)	CSC (rookery)	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2002)	Moderate, may forage in project area, but unlikely to breed
Black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)	SA (rookery)	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2007a)	Moderate, may forage in project area, but unlikely to breed
Great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*)	SA (rookery)	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2007a)	Moderate, may forage in project area, but unlikely to breed
Great egret (*Ardea alba*)	SA (rookery)	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2007a)	Moderate, expected to forage in project area, but unlikely to breed
Snowy egret (*Egretta thula*)	SA (rookery)	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2007a)	Moderate, expected to forage in project area, but unlikely to breed
Nuttall's woodpecker (*Picoides nuttallii*)	AWL	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2002)	Moderate, suitable habitat present, but species is uncommon in area
Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)	CSC	Near Robles Diversion Canal, 4 miles to the north (Ingamells, pers. obs., 2001)	Low, suitable habitat does not occur in close proximity to the project site
California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*)	CSC	Known from the region	Low, suitable habitat does not occur in close proximity to the project site
Long-eared owl (*Asio otus*)	CSC	Ventura River, Santa Ana Blvd. bridge, 1.3 miles upstream (Ingamells, pers. obs., 2008)	Low, species is rare in the region
White-tailed kite (*Elanus caerulus*)	CP	Known from the region as a migrant	Low, species is uncommon in the region

Table 5. Continued

Common Name (*Scientific Name*)	Status	Nearest Known Location	Potential to Occur within the Project Impact Area
Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)	CSC	Santa Clara River (Ingamells, pers. obs., 2008), also expected along Ventura River	Moderate, may forage along Ventura River, but unlikely to breed
Sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)	CSC	Known from the region as a migrant	Low, species is uncommon in the region
Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*)	CSC (nest)	Ventura River, 0.5 miles downstream (Padre Associates, 2007a)	High, expected to forage in project area, and may breed here
Mammals			
Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*)	SA	Route 33 San Antonio Creek bridge, 850 feet to the east, night roost only	No roosting habitat in impact area, but may forage in project area
Hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)	SA	Nordhoff Peak, 9 miles to the north-northeast (CNDDB, 2009)	No roosting habitat in impact area, but may forage in project area

Status Codes:
AWL Audubon Society Watch List
CSC California Species of Special Concern (CDFG)
CP Protected under California Fish & Game Code
SA Special Animal (CDFG)

ISSUE 7: AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Part 7.a Agricultural Soils

Setting. The California Department of Conservation has mapped the project site as grazing land. The Important Farmland Maps indicates the nearest important farmland is located along Santa Ana Road approximately 1,200 feet to the southwest of the project site. Soil of the project site have been classified as “riverwash” and is considered to have no value for farming (Edwards et al., 1970).

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would either directly or indirectly result in the loss of important agricultural soils.

Impacts (NI). Project-related disturbance would be limited to San Antonio Creek bank and adjacent channel. No loss of agricultural soils or lands would occur.

Part 7.b Agricultural Water Supply

Setting. Agricultural production in the project area relies on surface water diversion and local groundwater.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have an impact if it would affect the quantity or quality of water used for agricultural production. Impacts to agricultural water supply would be considered significant if the project would cause:

- The quality of agricultural water supply sources would be worsened to a level of greater than 1,200 milligrams per liter (mg/l) of total dissolved solids (TDS), or,

- A net decrease in the amount of water supply available to agricultural resources.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project may use a small amount of water during construction for dust control. However, this water would be obtained from dewatering excavations or local potable supplies, and would not affect any agricultural water supplies.

Part 7.c Air Quality/Micro-Climate

Setting. Farmlands are not located near the project site. Please see Issue 3 for a discussion of regional and local air quality.

Significance Thresholds. The project could impair the productivity of adjacent agricultural areas if it altered local air quality/micro-climate. The impact of the project to agricultural productivity would be considered significant if the project caused:

- A 10 percent or greater increase in dust deposition on adjacent agricultural areas;
- A 10 percent or greater decrease in incident solar energy on adjacent agricultural areas;
- The removal of any row(s) of trees, or;
- A substantial adverse change to the air quality/micro-climate of adjacent agricultural areas not related to dust, solar energy, and tree rows.

Impacts (NI). As indicated in Part 3.a, fugitive dust may be generated during the construction phase of the project; however, the project would implement dust control measures (see Part 3.b). Due to the lack of adjacent agricultural operations, project-related dust generation would not impact agricultural production. The project would not affect the amount of solar energy reaching nearby agricultural areas, would not involve the removal of any rows of trees, and would not cause any other adverse impacts to air quality or micro-climate.

Part 7.d Pests/Diseases

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would cause the introduction of or a substantial increase in pest density and/or disease severity or frequency in nearby agricultural areas.

Impacts (NI). The project would not introduce any urban structures or resident populations of persons, animals, or alien plant species into the local area. As such, the project would have no impact to agricultural areas with respect to pests and/or disease.

Part 7.e Land Use Incompatibility

Setting. The project is located within San Antonio Creek. There are rural residences to the north, east and southeast, with the nearest residence located approximately 250 feet north-northeast of the existing OVT culvert crossing. Agricultural operations in the immediate area are limited to horse corrals located 600 feet to the east.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would pose substantial land use incompatibilities with adjacent property currently in or suitable for agricultural production.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would not interfere with the existing zoning or designated land uses for this area or its adjacent properties. The project would merely improve an existing trail crossing and would not affect existing agricultural operations in the area. Therefore, the project would not result in impacts to agriculture relating from land use incompatibilities.

ISSUE 8: VISUAL RESOURCES

Part 8.a Scenic Highways

Setting. In the project area, the Ventura County General Plan designates State Route 33 as an eligible State Scenic Highway, and Santa Ana Road and Creek Road as eligible County scenic highways. The project site is briefly visible from Santa Ana Road (southbound lane only), but is mostly hidden by the roadway embankment, guard rail and intervening vegetation (see Figure 4.d).

Significance Thresholds. In accordance with Policy 1.7.2.4 of the Ventura County General Plan, the project would have a significant impact if it would "degrade visual resources or significantly alter or obscure public views."

Impacts (LS). Construction of the proposed project would involve removal of vegetation and temporary changes in landform, which may degrade views of San Antonio Creek from Santa Ana Road. However, this impact would be temporary as the project work area would be restored with native vegetation following the completion of construction. Short-term impacts are considered less than significant due to the relatively small area affected (approximately 3.65 acres), short project duration (3-4 months), and lack of prominence of the site with respect to the viewshed of the southbound motorist on Santa Ana Road.

The proposed bridge would be permanent and relatively large, with a span of about 510 feet and a maximum height of about 22 feet above the streambed. The bridge may be viewed as an intruding urban component, potentially altering the visual character of the Ventura River corridor at the confluence with San Antonio Creek. However, the bridge would be constructed of unfinished steel trusses, which would weather and provide a rural appearance. In addition, the bridge would be very similar in design and finish as the existing Ojai Valley Trail bridge at Cañada Larga (see Figure 5). Overall, the viewshed of Santa Ana Road would not be significantly degraded because the project site is mostly blocked from view and the bridge would not be prominent or inconsistent with the existing visual character of the river corridor and the Ojai Valley Trail. Therefore, impacts to scenic highways are considered less than significant.

Part 8.b Scenic Areas/Features

Setting. Lake Casitas is located approximately one mile west of the project site, and has been designated a scenic resource area by the Ventura County General Plan. However, the project site is not visible from Lake Casitas.

Significance Thresholds. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant impact on the environment if it would "have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic affect". The Ventura County General Plan states that a project would have a significant impact if it would "degrade visual resources or significantly alter or obscure public views."

Impacts (NI). The project site would not adversely affect any designated scenic areas or features.

ISSUE 9: PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Setting. A record search was conducted of the on-line collections data base of the University of California Museum of Paleontology. No documented collections were found in the project area (upper Ventura River region).

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would result in the loss of or damage to important paleontological resources. Paleontological resources are important if they are well preserved, identifiable, type/topotypic specimens, age diagnostic, useful in environmental reconstruction, represent rare and or endemic taxa, represent a diverse assemblage, or represent associated marine or non-marine taxa.

Impacts (NI). All ground disturbance associated with the proposed project would be located within recent stream channel deposits and alluvial sediments of Quaternary period (Holocene age) (Dibblee, 1987). Therefore, no disturbance of potentially fossil-bearing formations would occur. As such, project construction activities would not result in impacts to known or suspected paleontological resources.

ISSUE 10: CULTURAL RESOURCES

Part 10.a Archeological Resources

Setting. The project site lies within the historic territory of the Native American Indian group known as the Chumash. The Chumash occupied the region from San Luis Obispo County to Malibu Canyon on the coast, and inland as far as the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley, and the four northern Channel Islands (Grant, 1978). The Chumash are subdivided into factions based on distinct dialects.

The Ventureño were the southernmost Chumash group, occupying most of the area of present day Ventura County and the southwest corner of Los Angeles County. The name Ventureño is derived from the mission with local jurisdiction, San Buenaventura.

Chumash society developed over the course of some 9,000 years and achieved a level of social, political and economic complexity not ordinarily associated with hunting and gathering groups (Morrato, 1984). The prehistoric Chumash are believed to have maintained one of the most elaborate bead money systems in the world, as well as one of the most complex non-agricultural societies (King, 1990).

The Chumash aboriginal way of life ended with Spanish colonization. As neophytes brought into the mission system, they were transformed from hunters and gatherers into agricultural laborers and exposed to diseases to which they had no resistance. By the end of the Mission Period in 1834, the Chumash population had been decimated by disease and declining birthrates. Population loss as a result of disease and economic deprivation continued into the next century.

Today, many people claim their Chumash heritage in Ventura County. In general, they place high value on objects and places associated with their past history, especially burials, grave goods, and archaeological sites.

A Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation was completed for the project by Conejo Archeological Consultants, and is on file at the South Central Coast Information Center. The Investigation included a record search conducted at the South Central Coast Information Center and a field survey of the project site. One prehistoric archaeological site has been reported within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site, but is located on the west bank of the Ventura River.

Native American Consultation. A sacred lands file check conducted by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) did not indicate the presence of any Native American cultural resources in the immediate project area. The following Native American contacts were mailed a project description letter with a location map on January 7, 2009:

- Julie Tumamait
- Patrick Tumamait

The above Native American contacts were requested to respond if they had any cultural resources concerns regarding the Ojai Valley Trail bridge project. Mr. Tumamait called Conejo Archeological Consultants on January 12, 2009. He indicated that the terraces above the Ventura River and San Antonio Creek were very sensitive for Native American resources. Mr. Tumamait suggested that any earth disturbances above the creek and river bottom be monitored by an archaeologist and Chumash representative. Any additional responses received during the public comment period will be included in the final Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Significance Thresholds. The project would result in a significant impact if it would result in the loss or destruction of unique archeological resources. An archeological resource is considered unique when it:

- Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is demonstrable public interest in that information;
- Has a special and particular quality such as the oldest of its type or best available example of its type, or;
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

Impacts (PS-M). The record search identified no archeological resources within the project's area of potential effect. In addition, the field survey of the project site did not identify any archeological resources. However, the potential exists to significantly impact unreported cultural resources discovered during project-related excavation.

Mitigation. The following mitigation measures are consistent with the guidelines of the State Office of Historic Preservation and the Native American Heritage Commission and shall be incorporated into the project to prevent significant impacts, should resources be found during excavation.

- In the event that archeological resources are exposed during project construction, all earth disturbing work within the vicinity of the find shall be temporarily suspended or redirected until an archeologist has evaluated the nature and significance of the find. After the find has been appropriately mitigated, work in the area may resume.
- If human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin and deposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission.

Implementation of the above measures would reduce impacts to archeological resources to a level of less than significant.

Part 10.b Historical Resources

Setting. In 1769, Gaspar de Portola and Father Junipero Serra departed the newly established San Diego settlement and marched northward toward Monterey, with the objective to secure that port and establish five missions along the route. Mission San Buenaventura was founded by Father Serra in 1782 and is located approximately 7 miles to the south of the project site.

In 1822, Mexico gained its independence from Spain, and in 1834 the Missions were secularized and their lands granted as rewards for loyal service or in response to an individual's petition. The project site falls within the 1837 Mexican Land Grant Santa Ana (Cowan, 1977). The Mexican period ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which transferred control of California, New Mexico, Texas, and other western territories to the United States. During the American period, settlers slowly moved into the region and agriculture became increasingly important to the local economy. By the turn of the century, oil production had also become an important and growing part of the river valley's economy (Triem, 1985).

In 1892, the Ventura & Ojai Railway Company began laying railroad track for an electric railway between Ventura and Ojai. The railroad was completed to Nordhoff (Ojai) in 1898 (Macko, 1993). Stations listed along the Nordhoff Branch in 1901 include La Crosse, which was located just south of San Antonio Creek and east of the Ventura River. Following a major flood in 1914, a series of levees were constructed along the eastern banks of the Ventura River between Ventura Junction and La Crosse. The La Crosse station was abandoned in 1953 (Schmidt & Schmidt, 1994). The OVT is a non-motorized transportation, recreation and equestrian resource under the administration of the County of Ventura Parks Department. The OVT follows the earlier railroad line. Construction of the OVT along the Ventura River was completed in 1987.

The record search conducted as part of the Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation identified two historic resources within or adjacent to the project site.

CA-Ven-929H. This site was recorded by Foster and Greenwood in 1988 as a historic site consisting of house remnants and possible associated trash deposits, which date back to the 1870s. Prehistoric artifacts were also found at this site including two cobble pestles, two manos, a globular bowl, a maul/pounder, and small mortars. CA-Ven-929H is located approximately 0.5-mile upstream of the project site and would not be impacted by project implementation.

CA-Ven-1109H. This site represents the first and only railroad spur to enter the Ojai Valley. The Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) entered San Buenaventura in 1887, a time when the citrus industry was booming in Nordhoff (Ojai). A spur was built to Nordhoff by early 1898, and a small depot was erected east of South Fox Street and west of Bryant Street for the newly established Ventura River and Ojai Valley Railroad. SPRR took over the line in July 1899. The railroad was abandoned shortly after 1955 following the phasing out of the steam engine by SPRR. The tracks were removed in 1969 following heavy floods. In some locations, the old railway berm still remains (Macko 1993). The project site includes a small section of CA-Ven-1109H. However, the railroad tracks have been removed and the route was converted into the OVT in the 1980's.

The existing culvert bridge that would be replaced is less than 30 years old and not considered a historic resource.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would alter, move, relocate, or disturb historical resources such that the resources would lose any historically significant characteristics.

Impacts (LS). The existing OVT has been constructed within a portion of historic site CA-Ven-1109H, and bridge construction would also occur at this site. However, the removal of the old railroad tracks and construction of the existing OVT, along with the periodic washouts of the OVT and associated repairs within the project site have resulted in substantial alterations to CA-Ven-1109H. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts to CA-Ven-1109H.

Part 10.c Ethnic, Social, and Religious Resources

Setting. Based on the Cultural Resources Investigation completed for the project, there are no known burial grounds, places of worship or any other ethnically, socially, or religiously significant resources at the project site.

Significance Thresholds. The significance of impacts to these types of resources are determined on a case-by case basis.

Impacts (NI). The project would not impact ethnic, social or religious resources.

ISSUE 11: ENERGY RESOURCES

Setting. Conventional energy sources, especially fossil fuels, are considered limited resources, and conservation of these resources and development of alternative energy forms is important to the Country's future environmental quality.

Significance Thresholds. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant impact if it would result in the use of large amounts of fuel or energy, or use energy in a wasteful manner.

Impacts (NI). The project would involve the use of fuel during the construction phase; however, this energy use would be temporary, and not considered excessive or wasteful. The project would not impact energy resources.

ISSUE 12: COASTAL BEACHES AND SAND DUNES

Setting. The nearest coastal beach (Emma Wood State Beach) is located approximately seven miles to the south of the project site. The nearest sand dunes are located at San Buenaventura State Beach, located eight miles to the south-southeast of the project site. A portion of the sediment transported by the Ventura River watershed is trapped by the Matilija Dam, and does not reach coastal beaches.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would be inconsistent with goals and policies of the Ventura County General Plan. Potential impacts may include any direct impacts (i.e., physical removal or modification) or indirect impacts (i.e., creation of barriers to sand replenishment or disturbance of dune vegetation) of a project on these resources should be fully mitigated. Otherwise, a significant impact would occur.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would not modify the hydraulic characteristics of San Antonio Creek, and no change in sediment transport to the coast would occur.

ISSUE 13: SEISMIC HAZARDS

Part 13.a Fault Rupture

Setting. The entire Southern California region, including the Ventura area, is located within a seismically active area. The nearest fault (unnamed) is located approximately one mile north of the project site (Dibblee, 1987). No faults are known to pass through the project site, and it is not located within a designated Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would place persons or property at risk of loss of life or damage due to fault rupture.

Impacts (NI). As described above, the project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Special Study Zone or seismic hazard zone. The project would not involve any habitable structures, and fault rupture is not considered a potential hazard. Therefore, no impacts are expected.

Part 13.b Ground-shaking

Setting. Ground-shaking is the cause of most damage during earthquakes. The predominant (10 percent probability of exceedance in 50 years) earthquake in the project area is magnitude 6.8. In the project area, the peak ground acceleration with a probability of 10 percent exceedance in 50 years is 0.62 g in alluvium conditions (California Department of Conservation, 2003).

Significance Thresholds. Impacts from ground-shaking hazards are considered less than significant for projects of ordinary type and construction subject to the provisions of the Ventura County Building Code. Significant impacts from ground-shaking hazards would result for projects involving high-rise structures, critical facilities, and projects of unique design not covered by ordinary provisions of the Uniform Building Code (UBC). Such projects may subject persons and property to greater risk of loss of life or substantial damage during strong ground-shaking events.

Impacts (LS). The proposed project would not involve the construction of any high-rise buildings or unique structures, and would not introduce a greater number of persons into the area. The proposed bridge would be constructed according to State public works standards to reduce the potential impacts of ground-shaking. Based on final construction of the proposed project in accordance with these requirements, no significant ground-shaking hazards are expected.

Part 13.c Tsunami

Setting. Tsunamis are seismically induced sea waves that can be of sufficient size to cause substantial damage to coastal areas. The last major tsunami in Southern California was in 1812. The largest tsunami wave amplitude recorded in Ventura County was 8.8 feet, associated with the Chilean earthquake of 1960 (City of Port Hueneme, 1997). The nearest tsunami hazard zone is located approximately 6.5 miles south of the project site (Ventura County General Plan Hazards Appendix, updated 2004).

Significance Thresholds. Projects that would be located within an unmitigable tsunami hazard zone would have a significant impact.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project is not located in a tsunami hazard zone and would not increase the severity or the number of persons potentially affected by a tsunami.

Part 13.d Seiche

Setting. Seiches are oscillating waves that occur in enclosed or semi-enclosed bodies of water such as lakes and bays. Seiches are commonly caused by earthquakes. There is no record of a seiche occurring in Ventura County. The nearest body of water that may be subject to seiches is Lake Casitas, located one mile west of the project site.

Significance Thresholds. Projects that would be located within an unmitigable seiche hazard zone would have a significant impact.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project is not located in a seiche hazard zone and would not increase the severity or the number of persons potentially affected by a seiche.

Part 13.e Liquefaction

Setting. Liquefaction occurs when strong, cyclic motions during an earthquake cause water-saturated soils to lose their cohesion and take on a liquid state. Liquefied soils are unstable and can subject overlying structures to substantial damage. The occurrence of liquefaction is highly dependent on local soil properties, depth to groundwater, and the strength and duration of a given ground-shaking event. The project site is located within a liquefaction hazard zone designated by the California Department of Conservation (2003).

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if liquefaction hazards would subject persons or property to loss of life or substantial injury or damage.

Impacts (LS). Liquefaction could occur at the project site during a seismic event and the proposed bridge may be damaged. However, project development will include a geotechnical study to determine the foundation requirements to minimize the potential for liquefaction-related damage. The recommendations of the geotechnical study would be implemented, and impacts resulting from liquefaction hazards are considered less than significant.

ISSUE 14: GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

The project region is located within the Transverse Range Geomorphic Province. Soils of the project site have been classified as "riverwash" (Edwards et al., 1970).

Part 14.a Subsidence

Setting. Subsidence is generally related to over pumping of groundwater or petroleum reserves from deep underground reservoirs. No recognized subsidence has been identified within the project area (Ventura County General Plan Hazards Appendix, updated 2004).

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would cause or be subjected to a subsidence hazard that cannot be mitigated.

Impacts (NI). As indicated above, the project site is not located in an area that is known to experience subsidence. Also, the project would not involve the long-term withdrawal of groundwater or oil, neither would it alter groundwater recharge in the channel. As such, the project would neither cause nor be subjected to ground subsidence, and would have no impact.

Part 14.b Expansive Soils

Setting. Expansive soils are primarily clay-rich soils subject to changes in volume with changes in moisture content. Shrinking and swelling of soils can damage overlying structures, roadways, and utilities. The project site is not located within an expansive soil zone (Ventura County General Plan Hazards Appendix, updated 2004).

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would involve construction of unique structures that are especially susceptible to soil expansion in an area with highly expansive soils (i.e., with an expansion index greater than 20 are present).

Impacts (NI). Soils at the project site are not expansive. The proposed project would be resistant to expansive soils, and damage to adjacent properties would not occur.

Part 14.c Landslides/Mudslides

Setting. Areas of high landslide or mudflow potential are typically hillside areas with slopes of greater than 10 percent. The project site is located within an area of low potential for landslide/mudflow as designated in the Ventura County General Plan Hazards Appendix.

Significance Thresholds. A project would have a significant impact if the project site would be affected by a landslide/mudflow hazard that could not be mitigated.

Impacts (NI). The project area is level and has been determined to have little or no landslide/mudflow potential. The project would not increase the potential for landslide-related impacts.

ISSUE 15: HYDRAULIC HAZARDS

Part 15.a Erosion/Siltation

Setting. Generally speaking, erosion is the wearing away of soil and rock by weathering, mass wasting, and the action of streams, glaciers, waves, wind and underground water. The process of deposition of sediment from a state of suspension in water or air is referred to as sedimentation or siltation.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would cause substantial erosion or siltation.

Impacts (PS-M). Construction-related activities would include temporary flow diversion and excavation, and may result in erosion that results in siltation of downstream properties and wildlife habitats. The impact would be temporary, and primarily occur during stream diversion activities. Adverse impacts relating to erosion/siltation are considered potentially significant.

Mitigation. Measures are provided in Part 4.b that would reduce erosion and siltation impacts to a level of less than significant.

Part 15.b Flooding

Setting. The proposed project would be constructed within San Antonio Creek, which is a defined flood control channel that generates a 100-year floodplain mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the National Flood Insurance Program (see Flood Insurance Rate Map panel 060413 0545C). Based on hydrologic modeling conducted for the project, the estimated peak flow in San Antonio Creek at the OVT crossing during a 100-year flood is 38,200 cubic feet per second, with a water surface elevation of 318.69 feet.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would be substantially affected by flooding or if it would increase flooding hazard at upstream or downstream locations. FEMA considers a flood elevation increase of 1 foot during a 100-year storm to be significant.

Impacts (LS). Construction of the project would result in placement of approximately 342 cubic yards of fill (southern bridge approach and abutment, concrete bridge piers) within the 100-year floodplain. Fill within a floodplain may result in an increase in the elevation of floodwaters. However, approximately 342 cubic yards of fill would be removed from the northern bank of San Antonio Creek (see profile in Figure 3), resulting in no net increase in fill within the 100-year floodplain. By elevating the bridge above the 100-year water surface elevation and providing a balance of cut/fill within the floodplain, no significant flooding impacts would occur.

ISSUE 16: AVIATION HAZARDS

Setting. The nearest aviation facilities to the project site are the Santa Paula Airport (approximately 14 miles to the east) and the Oxnard Airport (approximately 13 miles to the south-southeast).

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would be incompatible with the safe operation of aviation facilities. Projects located within two miles of an airport are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Impacts (NI). The project site is not located within two miles of an airport. The project would not involve any activities or structures that are incompatible with the safe operation of aviation facilities, and no impacts to aviation would occur.

ISSUE 17: FIRE HAZARDS

Setting. As designated in the Ventura County General Plan Hazards Appendix, the project site is located in a low fire hazard area. Fire hazard ratings are dependent upon a number of factors that influence the potential destructiveness of a fire within the area in question. Such factors include, moisture levels, flammability of fuels (e.g., vegetation) in the area, slope exposure, etc.

Significance Thresholds. The Ventura Building Code, Article IV Section of Uniform Building Code 1601 identifies high fire hazard areas as any area within 500 feet of uncultivated brush, grass, or forest covered land wherein an authorized representative of the Fire District determines that a potential fire hazard exists due to the presence of such flammable growth. Projects located in a high fire hazard area may have a significant impact if fire prevention measures such as brush clearance are not implemented.

Impacts (NI). The project site is located within a low fire hazard area, and flammable vegetation (dry brush, grasses) does not occur within the work area. Therefore, impacts with respect to fire hazard are not anticipated.

ISSUE 18: HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/WASTE

Setting. A "hazardous material" means any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, physical or chemical characteristics poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or environment.

Significance Thresholds. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that a project would have a significant impact if it would create a public health hazard, expose people to a potential health hazard, or pose a threat to the environment. The County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines indicate the significance of hazardous materials impacts of a project shall be determined on a case-by-case basis considering the following parameters:

- Individual or cumulative physical hazard of material or materials.
- Amounts of materials on-site, either in use or storage.
- Proximity of hazardous materials to populated areas and compatibility of materials with neighboring facilities.

- Federal, State, and local laws and ordinances governing storage and use of hazardous materials.
- Potential for spill or release.
- Proximity of hazardous materials to receiving waters or other significant environmental resources.

Part 18.a Above-Ground Hazardous Materials

Impacts (LS). The only hazardous materials that may be used as part of the proposed project are hydrocarbons (fuel and lubricants) and coolant used in construction equipment and vehicles. Accidental discharge of these materials into San Antonio Creek during construction activities may create a potentially significant health hazard. Compliance with State regulations and implementation of mitigation measures provided in Part 4.b would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant.

Part 18.b Hazardous Materials

Setting. Based on a review of local records using Geotracker software developed by the State Water Resources Control Board, the nearest site with hazardous materials issues is located one mile to the north and involved leakage of gasoline from an underground storage tank. The case was closed in 2004, and appeared to be limited to local soil contamination.

Impacts (LS). Hazardous materials are not anticipated to be encountered during project construction. Therefore, significant public exposure to such materials would not occur.

Part 18.c Hazardous Waste

Setting. Hazardous materials are defined as any substance, which if improperly handled, can be damaging to the health and well being of humans (Ventura County General Plan Hazards Appendix, updated 2004). Hazardous materials become hazardous waste when the material has been used for its original intended purpose and is going to be discarded or recycled.

Significance Thresholds. The storage, handling and disposal of all potentially hazardous materials shall be in conformance with the requirements set forth in the following regulations:

- Enabling Legislation: California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Division 4.5.
- California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5.
- Permit Requirements: Ventura County Ordinance Chapter 5 (Hazardous Substances), Article 1, (Certified Unified Program Agency).

Impacts (NI). Hazardous materials utilized at the project site during construction are addressed in Part 18.a. These materials would not be discarded or recycled at the project site. Therefore, no hazardous waste would be generated, and no impacts would occur.

ISSUE 19: NOISE AND VIBRATION

Setting. Noise is generally defined as unwanted or objectionable sound. Noise levels are measured on a logarithmic scale because of physical characteristics of sound transmission and reception. Noise energy is typically reported in units of decibels (dB). Noise levels diminish (or attenuate) as distance to the source increases according to the inverse square rule, but the rate constant varies with the type of sound source. Sound attenuation from point sources such as industrial facilities is about 6 dB per doubling of distance. Heavily traveled road with few gaps in traffic behave as continuous line sources and attenuate at 3 dB per doubling of distance. Noise from more lightly traveled roads is attenuated at 4.5 dB per doubling of distance.

Community noise levels are measured in terms of the A-weighted decibel (dBA). A-weighting is a frequency correction that correlates overall sound pressure levels with the frequency response of the human ear. Equivalent noise level (Leq) is the average noise level on an energy basis for a specific time period. The duration of noise and the time of day at which it occurs are important factors in determining the impact of noise on communities. Noise is more disturbing at night and noise indices have been developed to account for the time of day and duration of noise generation. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and Day-Night Average Level (DNL or Ldn) are such indices. These indices are time-weighted, and average acoustic energy values over a 24-hour period. The CNEL index penalizes nighttime noise (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.) by adding 10 dB and evening noise (7 p.m. to 10 p.m.) by adding 5 dB to account for increased sensitivity of the community during these hours. The Ldn index penalizes nighttime noise the same as the CNEL index, but does not penalize evening noise.

The dominant source of noise in the project area is traffic on State Route 33, which travels at about 55 mph approximately 850 feet east of the project site.

Noise levels were measured at the OVT/Old Creek Road intersection on January 6, 2009 (13:04-13:24) using a Larson-Davis LXT Type 1 Precision Integrating Sound Level Meter. The Meter was calibrated using a Larson-Davis CAL200 Calibrator at 114 dBA. The measured noise value was 48.4 dBA Leq, indicating noise levels at the project site are relatively low, due the distance (850 feet) to the predominant noise source (State Route 33) and ground attenuation provided by intervening topography. Noise sensitive receptors in proximity to the project site are limited to five residences to the north-northeast (110 to 750 feet away) and one residence approximately 900 feet to the south-southwest (across the Ventura River).

Significance Thresholds. Policy 2.16.2-1(4) of the Ventura County General Plan provides the following thresholds:

> Noise generators proposed to be located near any noise sensitive use shall incorporate noise control measures so that ongoing outdoor noise levels received at the noise receptor, measured at the exterior wall of the building do not exceed any of the following standards:
>
> - Leq1H of 55 dBA or ambient noise level plus 3 dBA, whichever is greater, during any hour from 6 a.m. and 7 p.m.
> - Leq1H of 50 dBA or ambient noise level plus 3 dBA, whichever is greater, during any hour from 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.

- Leq1H of 45 dBA or ambient noise level plus 3 dBA, whichever is greater, during any hour from 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

General Plan Policy 2.16.2-1(5) requires construction noise to be evaluated and mitigated in accordance with the Construction Noise Threshold Criteria and Control Plan prepared by Advanced Engineering Acoustics (2005). Based on this document, noise-sensitive receptors include:

- Hospitals and nursing homes (sensitive 24 hours/day);
- Residences (sensitive during evening and nighttime – 7 pm to 7 am);
- Hotels and motels (sensitive during evening and nighttime); and
- Schools, churches and libraries (daytime and evening, when in use).

Construction would be limited to daytime hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.); therefore, local residences would not be considered noise-sensitive receptors and the construction noise thresholds would not apply.

Impacts (PS-M). The proposed project would generate noise only during the construction period. Potential noise sensitive receptors in the project area are limited to local residences. Noise levels would vary substantially during the 3-4 month construction period, and work may be suspended for a few days at a time during this period. Construction noise generated by the proposed project was estimated using the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model, based on a peak day consisting of pile driving at the northern abutment, near a residence. The modeling assumed an impact pile driver, wheeled loader and excavator would be in use on a peak day. The modeled noise value is 86.4 dBA Leq at the closest residence.

Construction would be limited to daytime hours (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.); therefore, adjacent residences are not considered noise sensitive. However, due to the close proximity of residences (as close as 110 feet) to the bridge site, construction noise impacts may be significant during peak periods (primarily pile driving).

Mitigation. The following measures shall be implemented to minimize construction noise impacts:

- Work hours shall be limited to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday; with no work on weekends or holidays, except under emergency circumstances;
- Trucks and equipment shall be operated with exhaust silencers in place and engine covers closed and in good repair; and
- GSA shall inform residents adjacent to the project site of the construction schedule and periods of anticipated high noise levels (primarily pile driving).

ISSUE 20: GLARE

Setting. Sources of light adjacent to the project site include nighttime traffic on Santa Ana Road (700 feet to the west), and exterior lighting at local residences and other land uses to the east.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would involve:

- Any light source in excess of 150 watts which directly illuminated adjacent properties;
- Indirect illumination of adjacent properties on excess of 0.5 foot candles;
- Pedestrian lighting with a point of overlap of greater than 7 feet, and;
- Lighting intensity exceeding 7-foot candles.

Impacts (NI). Construction activities would be conducted during daylight hours, such that lighting would not be required. In addition, there are no permanent lighting sources or reflective surfaces that may cause glare proposed as part of the project. Therefore, no impacts with respect to light and glare would occur.

ISSUE 21: PUBLIC HEALTH

Setting. A public health issue is defined by the County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines as a human health related issue, such as, but not limited to, vectors, bioaerosols, and other pathogens or environmental factors that may pose a substantial present or potential hazard to public health.

Significance Thresholds. Significance for public health related impacts must be determined on a case-by-case basis, and is related to project type, location, and other environmental factors.

Impacts (LS). Stagnant pools in the Ventura River near the OVT crossing have the potential to provide breeding habitat for mosquitoes. However, the Ventura County Watershed Protection District currently implements a County-wide mosquito control plan, which includes the project site. Stream diversion activities would not result in stagnant stream pools at the project site. Implementation of the County's mosquito control plan would prevent significant public health impacts associated with mosquito-borne disease.

ISSUE 22: TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION

Setting. The quality of traffic service provided by a roadway system can be described through the Level of Service (LOS) concept. LOS is a standardized means of describing traffic conditions by comparing traffic volumes in a roadway system with the system's capacity. An LOS rating of A-C indicates that the roadway is operating efficiently. Minor delays are possible on an arterial with a LOS of D. Level E represents traffic volumes at or near the capacity of the highway, resulting in possible delays and unstable flow.

Construction access to the site would be provided from State Route 33 and Old Creek Road. Based on year 2007 traffic counts compiled by Caltrans, volumes on State Route 33 at Creek Road (immediately north of the Old Creek Road intersection) are 24,400 vehicles per day (LOS E).

Part 22.a Public Roads and Highways

Significance Thresholds. The minimum acceptable level of service for County maintained local roads is LOS C, and LOS D for County thoroughfares and state highways. However, the Ventura County General Plan considers it acceptable for five roadway segments to operate at LOS E, including State Route 33 in the project area. The project would have a significant impact on public roads and highways if 10 percent or more of project-generated traffic would occur during peak hours on roadways and generate an unacceptable level of service.

Level of Service

Impacts (LS). The project would only generate a small number of vehicle trips (less than 60 one-way trips on a peak day) during construction, which would not contribute to a lowered level of service within the vicinity of the site. Therefore, level of service impacts would be less than significant.

Safety/Design

Impacts (LS). The project does not involve construction of a public or private road; therefore, no impacts to the safety and design of public roads would occur. Any project-related damage to public roadways would be repaired to County standards by the construction contractor. However, construction-related truck movements at the State Route 33/Old Creek Road intersection may be considered a traffic hazard due to limited sight distance on southbound State Route 33. As standard practice, GSA would require the selected contractor to develop and implement a traffic control plan to be approved by the Ventura County Transportation Division, which would prevent significant traffic safety impacts.

Tactical Access

Setting. Tactical access describes an organized system of roads that provides access to and from a project site in the event of any emergency or disaster. The project may have a significant impact with respect to tactical access if it would involve the construction of a public or private road with single access that is over 800 feet in length.

Impacts (NI). The project does not involve construction of a public or private road, and would not affect access to any land uses.

Part 22.b Private Roads and Driveways

Setting. Access to the project site would be provided by Old Creek Road, a private driveway/road. GSA would obtain permission from the property owner to use Old Creek Road during the construction period.

Significance Thresholds. A project would have a significant impact to private roads or driveways if it would create a temporary or permanent impediment to access, or create a public road or driveway that is not consistent with the traffic and circulation policies adopted by Ventura County.

Safety/Design

Impacts (LS). The construction of private roads is not included in the proposed project. The project's traffic control plan would include provisions to maintain safe operation of Old Creek Road during the construction period.

Tactical Access

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would not create an impediment to the tactical access of driveways of adjacent residences, and would not have an impact on access.

Part 22.c Pedestrian/Bicycle

Setting. The OVT is a regionally important Class 1 bike trail, which also accommodates pedestrian and equestrian use. The shoulders along State Route 33 are occasionally used by bicyclists and pedestrians.

Significance Thresholds. A project that would cause actual or potential barriers to existing or planned pedestrian/bicycle facilities may have a significant impact. Projects that generate or attract pedestrian/bicycle traffic volumes meeting requirements for protected highway crossings or pedestrian and bicycle facilities may have a significant impact. Pedestrian overcrossings, traffic signals, and bikeways are examples of these types of facilities.

Public Facilities

Impacts (PS-M). Construction of the proposed bridge would require temporary closure of the OVT during the 3-4 month construction period.

Mitigation. The following measures shall be implemented to minimize impacts to the Ojai Valley Trail.

- Signage warning approaching OVT users about bridge construction shall be placed approximately 300 feet north and south of the work area;
- A detour (including fencing) shall be provided around the bridge work area at the end of each work week to allow safe usage of the OVT on weekends;

Private Facilities

Impacts (NI). The proposed project does not include any private pedestrian or bicycle facilities, and no such facilities are present in the project area. Therefore, no impacts to these facilities would occur.

Part 22.d Off-Street Parking

Setting. The project site is located along the Ventura River, with no parking available in the area. Off-street parking is provided within the Oak View and Casitas Springs communities in the project area.

Significance Thresholds. Impacts may be significant if construction parking cannot be accommodated on-site.

Impacts (NI). The project would not generate parking demand, and would not impact the supply of parking in the project area. Construction-related parking would be provided on-site within the staging area or along Old Creek Road.

Part 22.e Bus Transit

Setting. Bus service in the project area is provided by Gold Coast Transit. Route 16 serves the Ojai area via Main Street and Ventura Avenue in the project area.

Significance Thresholds. A project may have a significant impact if it would substantially interfere with existing bus transit facilities or create a substantial demand for bus transit facilities or services.

Impacts (NI). The project would not increase the demand for bus transit services, or adversely affect bus transit facilities.

Part 22.f Railroads

Setting. The nearest tracks (Union Pacific Railroad) are located south of U.S. 101, approximately 7.3 miles south of the project site.

Significance Thresholds. A project would normally have a significant impact on a railroad if it would substantially interfere with an existing railroad's facilities or operations.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would not generate rail traffic or interfere with railroad operations. No impacts to railroads would occur.

Part 22.g Airports

Setting. The nearest municipal airport is the Oxnard Airport, located approximately 13 miles to the south-southeast. The nearest private airport is the Santa Paula Airport, located approximately 14 miles to the east.

Significance Thresholds. Incompatible land uses within 2 miles of an airport may have a significant impact.

Impacts (NI). The project is not located within 2 miles of an airport and would not conflict with airport operations, or adversely affect airport facilities.

Part 22.h Harbor Facilities

Setting. The nearest harbor is the Ventura Harbor, located approximately 9.3 miles to the south-southeast.

Significance Thresholds. The significance of impacts to harbors is determined by the harbor operator, which is the Ventura Port District for the Ventura Harbor.

Impacts (NI). The project would not increase harbor traffic, or adversely affect harbor facilities.

Part 22.i Pipelines

Setting. There are numerous pipelines in the project area, associated with historic or current oil and gas production, water supply, wastewater and natural gas. However, there are no known pipelines within the proposed work area.

Significance Thresholds. A project would have a significant impact if it would substantially interfere with, or affect the operations of an existing pipeline.

Impacts (NI). The project would not interfere with the operation of existing pipelines.

ISSUE 23: WATER SUPPLY

Setting. The potable water needs of the area are served by local groundwater and surface water diverted from the Ventura River to Lake Casitas.

Part 23.a Domestic Water Quality

Setting. Domestic water is defined by the County of Ventura Initial Study Assessment Guidelines as a supply of potable water used for human consumption or connected to domestic plumbing fixtures in which the supply is obtained from an approved individual water supply system or a public water system operating with an unrevoked permit from the Ventura County Environmental Health Division or the California State Department of Health Services.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would result in the use of domestic water that does not meet applicable State Drinking water standards as described in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project does not require a domestic supply of water; therefore, no impacts to domestic water quality would result.

Part 23.b Domestic Water Quantity

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if its demand for domestic water could not be met or if it would result in the withdrawal of groundwater in an overdrafted groundwater basin.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project does not require a domestic supply of water.

Part 23.c Fire Flow

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if sufficient water flow would not be available to meet the fire fighting needs of the project.

Impacts (NI). The project would not involve the construction of flammable structures, and would not require fire protection services. Further, the project would not affect fire flow pressures for any other uses. As such, no impacts with respect to fire flow are expected.

ISSUE 24: WASTE TREATMENT/DISPOSAL

Part 24.a Individual Sewage Disposal Systems

The project would not involve the use of any individual septic systems, and would have no impacts in this respect.

Part 24.b Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would individually or cumulatively generate sewage effluent which would be discharged to and exceed the capacity of an existing sewer main or sewage treatment plant. If the project description includes improvements to existing, or construction of new sewer mains and/or sewage treatment plants which would then be capable of serving the project and other cumulative development, there would be a less than significant impact.

Impacts (NI). The project would not result in the long-term generation of sewage, and therefore, would not create permanent demand for sewage collection or treatment facilities. Sewage generated by construction workers would be handled by portable septic facilities. No impacts with respect to sewage capacity would result from the project.

Part 24.c Solid Waste Management

Setting. Solid waste generated in the project area is disposed at the Toland Road Landfill.

Significance Thresholds. Any project that generates solid waste would have an impact on the demand for solid waste disposal capacity in Ventura County. However, unless the County has reason to believe that there is less than 15 years of disposal capacity available for County disposal, no individual project would have a significant impact on the demand for solid waste capacity.

The Countywide Siting Element approved by the California Integrated Waste Management Board on June 20, 2001 demonstrates that the approval of extension of the existing Solid Waste Facility Permit for the Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center, combined with the existing permitted capacity of the Toland Road Landfill would provide Ventura County with sufficient disposal capacity beyond the 15 year planning period mandated by State law. Therefore, no individual project would have a significant impact on the demand for solid waste capacity.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would not generate any solid waste. All earth materials would be balanced on-site, and any concrete debris would be removed from the site for recycling.

Part 24.d Solid Waste Facilities

Setting. Solid waste generated in the project area is disposed at the Toland Road Landfill.

Significance Thresholds. Solid waste facilities shall be in compliance with the following statutes and regulations and are subject to enforcement by the EHD/LEA:

- California Health and Safety Code
- California Code of Regulations, Title 14

- California Code of Regulations, Title 27
- California Public Resources Code

Impacts (NI). The proposed project does not involve a solid waste operation or facility, and would not have an impact on solid waste facilities within the region.

ISSUE 25: UTILITIES

Part 25.a Electricity

Impacts (NI). The project would not involve the use of electricity either during construction or operation phases. Any power requirements for construction, such as a sump pump, would be provided by an on-site generator. Therefore, no impacts to electricity service would result.

Part 25.b Natural Gas

Impacts (NI). The project would not involve the use of natural gas either during construction or operation phases. No loss of service or demand for new service would occur.

Part 25.c Communications

Impacts (NI). The project would not involve the establishment of or require use of communications lines. No loss of service or demand for new service would occur.

ISSUE 26: FLOOD CONTROL/DRAINAGE FACILITIES

Part 26.a Watershed Protection District Facilities

Setting. The Ventura River levee protecting Casitas Springs is located approximately 150 feet south of the project site and is a Watershed Protection District flood control facility.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would substantially change the flow rate (i.e., increased runoff), velocity, erosion potential, or capacity of flood control channels.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would involve removal of the existing culverts and widening the San Antonio Creek channel, which would reduce storm water velocity and resulting erosion potential. No impacts to the Ventura River levee are anticipated.

Part 26.b Other Facilities

Setting. No other flood control or erosion control facilities occur in the immediate project area.

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would substantially change the flow rate (i.e., increased runoff), velocity, erosion potential, or capacity of flood control channels. In reviewing a project for impacts, the following are to be given consideration:

- Deposition of sediment and debris materials within existing channels and allied obstruction of flow.
- Capacity of the channel and the potential for overflow during design storm conditions.

- Increased runoff and the effects on areas of special flood hazard and regulatory channels both on and off site.

Impacts (NI). No other flood control or erosion control facilities would be affected.

ISSUE 27: LAW ENFORCEMENT/EMERGENCY SERVICES

Impacts (NI). The project would not attract persons to the local area, and would not require that additional law enforcement or emergency services personnel, equipment, or facilities be provided. As such, no impacts to these services would result.

ISSUE 28: FIRE PROTECTION

Impacts (NI). The project would not attract persons to the local area, and would not construct any flammable structures or otherwise create a fire hazard. As such, no fire protection services would be required by the project, and no impacts would result.

ISSUE 29: EDUCATION

Impacts (NI). The project would not increase population or otherwise draw people to the local area. As such, no impacts would result to educational services.

ISSUE 30: RECREATION

Part 30.a Local Parks/Facilities

Setting. There are no local (city) parks in the vicinity of the project site.

Significance Thresholds. A project would have a significant impact on recreation if it would cause an increase in the demand for recreation when measured against the following standards:

- Local Parks/ Facilities: 5 acres of developable land (less than 15% slope) per 1000 population.
- Regional Parks/Facilities: 5 acres of developable land per 1000 population.
- Regional Trails/Corridors: 2.5 miles per 1000 population.

A project would have a significant impact on recreation if it would impede future development of Recreation Parks/Facilities and/or Regional Trails/Corridors.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would not create a demand for recreational facilities, and would not affect access or future development of existing facilities. Therefore, the project would not impact local parks/facilities.

Part 30.b Regional Parks/Facilities

Setting. A regional park is defined as an extent of land that, by its unique, natural character or unusual or extensive development, offers recreation opportunities that attract patronage from beyond the local vicinity without regard to physical, political, or municipal boundaries. The nearest regional park is Foster Park, a day use park adjacent to the Ventura River, located approximately 1.6 miles south of the project site.

Impacts (NI). The proposed project would not create a demand for recreational facilities and would not impede the use of any park. Therefore, no impacts to regional parks would occur.

Part 30.c Regional Trails/Corridors

Setting. Regional trails are intended to accommodate non-motorized recreational travel through areas removed from vehicular traffic. Regional trails/corridors should link major park and recreation facilities. The OVT is a regional recreational trail.

Impacts (NI). See Part 22.c regarding temporary construction-related loss of use of the OVT. The proposed bridge would improve user safety and allow for all-weather use of the OVT, which is considered a beneficial impact.

4.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are defined as two or more individual effects which, when considered together are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. Under Section 15064 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the lead agency (GSA) must identify cumulative impacts, determine their significance and determine if the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable.

The following provides a list of other planned or approved projects in the Ojai Area of Ventura County.

1. Winery and vineyard: 36.2 acres on Santa Ana Road, under review;
2. CUP 3929: time extension to authorize construction of additional recreational buildings and dwellings at 655 Burnham Road, permit application incomplete;
3. Accessory hay barn: 7,200 square feet at 8434 Ojai-Santa Paula Road, permit application incomplete;
4. Residential subdivision: 34 single-family lots from 40 to 160 acres, under review; and
5. Two-lot parcel map; sub-divide 5 acre lot to create an additional lot at 211 N. La Luna Avenue, under review.

4.1 AIR QUALITY

Projects listed above would generate both short-term construction emissions and long-term vehicle emissions. The proposed project would not contribute to cumulative long-term vehicle emissions, but may contribute to cumulative construction emissions, should construction of these projects occur at the same time as the proposed project. However, construction emissions of both the proposed project and other projects would be mitigated by standard measures required by the Ventura County APCD. Implementation of these measures is considered to prevent significant project-specific and cumulative air quality impacts from construction. Therefore, cumulative air quality impacts from construction are considered less than significant.

4.2 WATER RESOURCES

Projects listed above would require potable water service and may affect groundwater supplies. The proposed project would not require a water supply and would not contribute to this impact.

Cumulative development would increase pollutant concentrations in storm run-off and may adversely affect surface water quality. During the construction period, the proposed project may contribute to cumulative surface water quality impacts. However, mitigation measures are provided to avoid and minimize impacts to surface water quality.

Similar to the proposed project, some of the cumulative projects are located near drainages and inadvertent spills of fuel or lubricants could occur and percolate into groundwater supplies. The proposed project would contribute to this cumulative impact, and may be considerable. However, mitigation measures are provided to avoid and minimize impacts to groundwater quality.

4.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Each of the cumulative projects listed above would be located in previously disturbed areas and would not result in the loss of native vegetation or wildlife habitat. The proposed project would incrementally contribute to loss of sensitive riparian habitat along the Ventura River and San Antonio Creek. However, mitigation measures have been provided to offset project impacts to uplands, riparian vegetation, wetlands and special-status wildlife species.

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cumulative projects listed above are primarily located in previously developed areas and are unlikely to adversely affect intact archeological resources. However, similar to the proposed project, isolated resources may be discovered during construction-related ground disturbance. The proposed project would contribute to this cumulative impact; however, mitigation measures are provided to avoid and minimize potential impacts to archeological resources.

4.5 NOISE

Projects listed above would generate both short-term construction noise and long-term traffic noise. The proposed project would not contribute to cumulative traffic noise, but may contribute to cumulative construction noise. However, the proposed project is not located in close proximity to other projects and would not have a considerable incremental contribution to impacts at noise sensitive receptors affected by these projects.

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APPENDIX A

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

The Initial Study Checklist was prepared following the format adopted by the County of Ventura (2008).

	ISSUE	PROJECT IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *				CUMULATIVE IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *			
		N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
GENERAL:	1. General Plan Environmental Goals and Policies:			X				X	
LAND USE:	2. Land Use:								
	a. Community Character	X				X			
	b. Housing	X				X			
	c. Growth Inducement	X				X			
RESOURCES:	3. Air Quality:								
	a. Regional			X				X	
	b. Local		X				X		
	4. Water Resources:								
	a. Groundwater Quantity		X			X			
	b. Groundwater Quality			X				X	
	c. Surface Water Quantity	X				X			
	d. Surface Water Quality			X			X		
	5. Mineral Resources:								
	a. Aggregate		X				X		
	b. Petroleum	X				X			
	6. Biological Resources:								
	a. Endangered, Threatened, or Rare species			X				X	
	b. Wetland Habitat			X				X	
	c. Coastal Habitat		X				X		
	d. Migration corridors		X				X		
	e. Locally Important Species/ Communities			X				X	
	7. Agricultural Resources:								
	a. Soils	X				X			
	b. Water	X				X			
	c. Air Quality/Micro-Climate	X				X			
	d. Pests/Diseases	X				X			
	e. Land Use Incompatibility	X				X			

	ISSUE	PROJECT IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *				CUMULATIVE IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *			
		N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
	8. Visual Resources:								
	a. Scenic Highway		X				X		
	b. Scenic Area/Feature	X				X			
	9. Paleontological Resources:	X				X			
	10. Cultural Resources:								
	a. Archaeological			X				X	
	b. Historical		X				X		
	c. Ethnic, Social, or Religious	X				X			
	11. Energy Resources:	X				X			
	12. Coastal Beaches & Sand Dunes:	X				X			
HAZARDS:	13. Seismic Hazards:								
	a. Fault Rupture	X				X			
	b. Ground-shaking		X				X		
	c. Tsunami	X				X			
	d. Seiche	X				X			
	e. Liquefaction		X				X		
	14. Geologic Hazards:								
	a. Subsidence	X				X			
	b. Expansive Soils	X				X			
	c. Landslides/Mudslides	X				X			
	15. Hydraulic Hazards:								
	a. Erosion/Siltation			X				X	
	b. Flooding		X				X		
	16. Aviation Hazards:	X				X			
	17. Fire Hazards:	X				X			
	18. Hazardous Materials/Waste:								
	a. Above-Ground Hazardous Materials		X				X		
	b. Hazardous Materials		X				X		
	c. Hazardous Waste	X				X			
	19. Noise and Vibration:			X				X	
	20. Glare:	X				X			
	21. Public Health:		X				X		

ISSUE	PROJECT IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *				CUMULATIVE IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *			
	N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
22. Transportation/Circulation								
a. Public Roads and Highways								
(1) Level of Service		X				X		
(2) Safety/Design		X				X		
(3) Tactical Access	X				X			
b. Private Roads and Driveways								
(1) Safety/Design		X				X		
(2) Tactical Access	X				X			
c. Pedestrian/Bicycle								
(1) Public Facilities			X				X	
(2) Private Facilities	X				X			
d. Off-Street Parking	X				X			
e. Bus Transit	X				X			
f. Railroads	X				X			
g. Airports	X				X			
h. Harbor Facilities	X				X			
i. Pipelines	X				X			
23. Water Supply								
a. Quality	X				X			
b. Quantity	X				X			
c. Fire Flow	X				X			
24. Waste Treatment/Disposal								
a. Individual Sewage Disposal System	X				X			
b. Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities	X				X			
c. Solid Waste Management	X				X			
d. Solid Waste Facilities	X				X			
25. Utilities								
a. Electric	X				X			
b. Gas	X				X			
c. Communications	X				X			

ISSUE	PROJECT IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *				CUMULATIVE IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT *			
	N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
26. Flood Control/Drainage								
a. FCD Facility	X				X			
b. Other Facilities	X				X			
27. Law Enforcement/Emergency Svs.								
a. Personnel/Equipment	X				X			
b. Facilities	X				X			
28 Fire Protection								
a. Distance/Response Time	X				X			
b. Personnel/Equipment/Facilities	X				X			
29. Education								
a. Schools	X				X			
b. Libraries	X				X			
30. Recreation								
a. Local Parks/Facilities	X				X			
b. Regional Parks/Facilities	X				X			
c. Regional Trails/Corridors	X				X			

*Explanation: Degree of Effect

N = No Effect
LS = Less Than Significant Effect
PS-M = Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigation is Incorporated
PS = Potentially Significant Impact

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

		Yes/Maybe	No
1.	Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	X	—
2.	Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one that occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future).	—	X
3.	Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effect of other current projects, and the effect of probable future projects. (Several projects may have relatively small individual impacts on two or more resources, but the total of those impacts on the environment is significant).	—	X
4.	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	—	X

DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

On the basis of this evaluation:

[ ] I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared.

[X] I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures described in Section 5.0 of the Initial Study will be applied to the project. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared.

[ ] I find that the proposed project, individually or cumulatively, MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required*.

[ ] I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been adequately addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that that remain to be addressed.

[ ] I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Ventura County General Services Agency Director

7/7/09
Date

APPENDIX B

VASCULAR PLANT FLORA OBSERVED IN THE VICINITY OF THE OJAI VALLEY TRAIL SAN ANTONIO CREEK CROSSING

Appendix B. Vascular Plant Flora Observed in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail, San Antonio Creek Crossing

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habit	Wetland Indicator Status	Family
*Agrostis viridis**	Bent grass	AG	OBL	Poaceae
*Amaranthus albus**	Tumbleweed	AH	FACU	Amaranthaceae
Ambrosia psilostachya	Western ragweed	PH	FAC	Asteraceae
*Anagallis arvensis**	Scarlet pimperne	AH	FAC	Primulaceae
*Apium graveolens**	Celery	AH	FACW	Apiaceae
Artemisia californica	California sagebrush	S	.	Asteraceae
Artemisia douglasiana	Mugwort	PH	FACW	Asteraceae
*Arundo donax**	Giant reed	PH	FACW	Poaceae
Astragalus trichopodus var. phoxus	Milk vertch	PH	.	Fabaceae
*Avena fatua**	Wild oats	AG	.	Poaceae
Baccharis pilularis	Coyote brush	S	.	Asteraceae
Baccharis salicifolia	Mule fat, seep-willow	S	FACW	Asteraceae
*Brassica rapa**	Field mustard	AH	.	Brassicaceae
*Bromus diandrus **	Ripgut grass	AG	.	Poaceae
*Bromus hordaceus**	Soft chess	AG	FACU	Poaceae
*Bromus madritensis ssp. rubens**	Red brome	AG	.	Poaceae
Calystegia macrostegia ssp. cyclostegia	Morning glory	PV	.	Convolvulaceae
*Carduus pycnocephalus**	Italian thistle	AH	.	Asteraceae
*Centaurea melitensis**	Tocalote	AH	.	Asteraceae
*Chenopodium album**	Lamb's quarters	AH	.	Chenopodiaceae
*Conium maculatum**	Poison hemlock	AH	FACW	Apiaceae
Conyza canadensis	Horseweed	AH	FAC	Asteraceae
*Cynodon dactylon **	Bermuda grass	PG	FAC	Poaceae
Cyperus eragrostis	Nut-sedge	PH	FACW	Cyperaceae
Datura wrighti	Jimson-weed	AH	.	Solanaceae
Epilobium ciliatum ssp. ciliatum	Northern willow-herb	AH	FACW	Onagraceae
Eremocarpus setigerus	Turkey mullein	AH	FACW	Euphorbiaceae
*Erodium cicutarium **	Redstem filaree	AH	.	Geraniaceae
Eriogonum fasciculatum	California buckwhea	S	.	Polygonaceae
*Eucalyptus globulus**	Blue gum	T	.	Myrtaceae
Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia	Eucrpta	AH	.	Hydrophyllaceae
*Euphorbia peplus**	Petty spurge	AH	.	Euphorbiaceae
*Foeniculum vulgare **	Sweet fenne	PH	FACU	Apiaceae
*Genista monspessulana**	French broom	S	.	Fabaceae
Gnaphalium californicum	California everlasting	BH	.	Asteraceae
*Gnaphalium luteo-album**	Weedy cudweed	AH	FACW	Asteraceae
Hazardia squarrosa	Golden-bush	S	.	Asteraceae
Heterotheca sessiliflora	Golden-aster	PH	.	Asteraceae
*Hirschfeldia incana**	Summer mustard	BH	.	Brassicaceae
*Hordeum murinum**	Hare barley	AG	.	Poaceae
*Hypochaeris glabra**	Smooth cats-ear	AH	.	Asteraceae
Juglans californica	Southern California black walnu	T	FAC	Juglandaceae
*Lactuca serriola**	Prickly lettuce	AH	.	Asteraceae
Lepidospartum squamatum	Scale-broom	S	.	Asteraceae
*Lolium multiflorum**	Italian ryegrass	AG	FAC	Poaceae
Lotus scoparius	Deer weed	S	.	Fabaceae
Lotus strigosus	Strigose lotus	AH	.	Fabaceae
Lupinus succulentus	Succulent lupine	AH	.	Fabaceae
Malacothrix saxatilis var. tenuifolia	Cliff aster	AH	.	Asteraceae
*Malva parviflora**	Cheeseweed	AH	.	Malvaceae
Marah macrocarpus var. macrocarpus	Man-root	PV	.	Cucurbitaceae
*Marrubium vulgare **	White horehound	S	FAC	Lamiaceae
*Medicago polymorpha**	Bur-clover	AH	.	Fabaceae
*Melilotus alba **	White sweetclover	A/BH	FACU+	Fabaceae
*Melilotus indica**	Yellow sweet-clove	AH	FAC	Fabaceae
Mimulus guttatus	Creek monkey-flowe	AH	OBL	Scrophulariaceae
*Nicotiana glauca**	Tree tobacco	S	.	Solanaceae
*Opuntia ficus-indica**	Indian fig	S	.	Cactaceae
Phacelia cicutaria	Caterpillar phacelia	AH	.	Hydrophyllaceae
Phacelia ramossisima	Branching phacelia	PH	.	Hydrophyllaceae
*Picris echioides **	Bristly ox-tongue	AH	FAC*	Asteraceae
*Piptatherum miliaceum**	Smilo grass	PG	.	Poaceae
*Plantago lanceolata **	Narrowleaf or English plantain	PH	FAC-	Plantaginaceae
*Plantago major**	Common plantain	PH	FACW-	Plantaginaceae
Platanus racemosa	Western sycamore	T	FACW	Platanaceae
*Polygonum arenastrum**	knot-weed	AH	.	Polygonaceae

Appendix B. Vascular Plant Flora Observed in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail, San Antonio Creek Crossing

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habit	Wetland Indicator Status	Family
*Polypogon monspeliensis**	Rabbits-foot grass	AG	FACW	Poaceae
Populus balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa	Black cottonwood	T	FACW	Salicaceae
Quercus agrifolia var. agrifolia	Coast live oak	T	.	Fagaceae
*Ricinus communis**	Castor bean	S	FACU	Euphorbiaceae
Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum	Watercress	PH	OBL	Brassicaceae
Rubus ursinus	California blackberry	PV	.	Rosaceae
*Rumex crispus **	Curly dock	PH	FACW-	Polygonaceae
Rumex salicifolius	Willow dock	PH	OBL	Polygonaceae
Salix exigua	Narrow-leaf willow	T	FACW	Salicaceae
Salix laevigata	Red willow	T	FACW	Salicaceae
Salix lasiolepis	Arroyo willow	T	FACW	Salicaceae
*Senecio vulgaris**	Common groundse	AH	.	Asteraceae
*Silene gallica**	Windmill pink	AH	.	Caryophyllaceae
*Silybum marianum**	Milk thistle	BH	.	Asteraceae
*Sisymbrium officinale**	Hedge mustard	AH	.	Brassicaceae
Solanum douglasi	White nightshade	AH	.	Solanaceae
Solanum xanti	Purple nightshade	AH	.	Solanaceae
*Sonchus oleraceus**	Common sow thistle	AH	NI*	Asteraceae
Umbellularia californica	California bay-laure	T	FAC	Lauraceae
Urtica dioca	Stinging nettle	AH	FACW	Urticaceae
Toxicodendron diversilobum	Poison oak	PV	.	Anacardiaceae
*Tribulus terrestris**	Puncture vine	AH	.	Zygophyllaceae
Verbena lasiostachys	Verbena	PH	.	Verbenaceae
*Veronica anagallis-aquatica**	Water or common speedwel	AH	OBL	Scrophulariaceae
Vitis californica	California wild grape	PV	FACW	Vitaceae
*Vulpia myuros**	Rat-tail fescue	AG	.	Poaceae
*Washingtonia filifera**	California fan palm	T	.	Arecaceae
Xanthium strumarium	Cocklebur	AH	FAC+	Asteraceae

Notes: Scientific nomenclature follows Hickman (1993) and California Native Plant Society (200
An "*" indicates non-native species which have become naturalized or persist without cultivati
An "**" indicates species that have been planted and cultivate

Habit Definitions
AF = annual fern or fern ally
AG = annual grass
AH = annual herb
BH = biennial herb
PF = perennial fern or fern ally
PG = perennial grass
PH = perennial herb
PV = perennial vine
S = shrub.
T = tree.

Wetland indicator status (Reed 1988): OBL = obligate wetland species, occurs almost always in wetlands (>99% prob
FACW = facultative wetland species, usually found in wetlands (67-99% probability
FAC = facultative species, equally likely to occur in wetlands or nonwetlands (34-67% probabili
FACU = facultative upland species, usually occur in nonwetlands (67-99% probability
+ or - symbols are modifiers that indicate greater or lesser affinity for wetland habita
NI = no indicator has been assigned due to a lack of information to determine indicator stat
* = a tentative assignment to that indicator status by Reed (198
A period "." indicates that no wetland indicator status has been given in Reed (198

APPENDIX C

VERTEBRATE ANIMAL SPECIES OBSERVED OR EXPECTED IN THE VICINITY OF THE OJAI VALLEY TRAIL SAN ANTONIO CREEK CROSSING, VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1)	Status(2)
FISH			
Centrarchidae			
Green sunfish	*Lepomis cyanellus*	B/F	--
Large-mouth bass	*Micropterus salmoides*	B/F	--
Cottidae			
Prickly sculpin	*Cottus asper*	B/F	--
Cyprinidae			
Goldfish	*Carassius auratus*	B/F	--
Fathead minnow	*Pimephales promelas*	B/F	--
Common carp	*Cyprinus carpio*	B/F	--
*Arroyo chub	*Gila orcutti*	B/F	CSC
Fundulidae			
California killifish	*Fundulus parvipinnis*	B/F	--
Gasterosteidae			
*Partially-armored 3-spined stickleback	*Gasterosteus aculeatus microcephalus*	B/F	--
Ictaluridae			
Black bullhead	*Ameiurus melas*	B/F	--
Petromyzontidae			
Pacific lamprey	*Lampetra tridentata*	B/F	--
Poeciliidae			
Western mosquitofish	*Gambusia affinis*	B/F	--
Salmonidae			
*Steelhead	*Oncorhynchus mykiss*	F	FE, CSC
AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES			
Plethodontidae			
Black-bellied salamander	*Batrachoseps nigriventris*	B/F	--
Ensatina	*Ensatina eschscholzia eschscholzia*	B/F	--
Hylidae			
*Pacific treefrog	*Hyla regilla*	B/F	--
*California treefrog	*Hyla cadaverina*	B/F	--
Bufonidae			
California toad	*Bufo boreas halophilus*	B/F	--
Ranidae			
*California red-legged frog	*Rana aurora draytonii*	B/F	FT, CSC
*Bullfrog	*Rana catesbiana*	B/F	--
Emydidae			
*Southwestern pond turtle	*Clemmys marmorata pallida*	B/F	SA
Red-eared slider	*Pseudemys scripta*	B/F	--

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1)	Status(2)
Iguanidae			
*Western fence lizard	*Sceloporus occidentalis longipes*	B/F	--
*Side-blotched lizard	*Uta stansburiana elegans*	B/F	--
Coast horned lizard	*Phrynosoma coronatum frontale*	B/F	CSC
Teiidae			
Coastal western whiptail	*Cnemidophorus tigris multiscutatus*	B/F	SA
Scincidae			
Western skink	*Eumeces skiltonianus*	B/F	--
Anguidae			
San Diego alligator lizard	*Elgaria multicarinatus webbii*	B/F	--
Anniellidae			
Silvery legless lizard	*Anniella pulchra pulchra*	B/F	CSC
Colubridae			
San Diego gopher snake	*Pituophis melanoleucus annectens*	B/F	--
Southern Pacific rattlesnake	*Crotalus viridis helleri*	B/F	--
California kingsnake	*Lampropeltis getulus californiae*	B/F	--
San Bernardino ringneck snake	*Diadophis punctatus modestus*	B/F	SA
San Diego mountain kingsnake	*Lampropeltis zonata pulchra*	B/F	CSC
Western black-headed snake	*Tantilla planticeps*	B/F	--
Yellow belly racer	*Coluber constrictor mormon*	B/F	--
Red coachwhip	*Masticophis flagellum piceus*	B/F	--
California striped racer	*Masticophis lateralis lateralis*	B/F	--
Coast patch-nosed snake	*Salvadora hexalepis virgultea*	B/F	CSC
Two-striped garter snake	*Thamnophis hammondii*	B/F	CSC
Coast garter snake	*Thamnophis elegans terrestris*	B/F	--
BIRDS			
Podicepedidae			
Western grebe	*Aechmophorus occidentalis*	F	MB
*Pied-billed grebe	*Podilymbus podiceps*	F	MB
Phalacrocoracidae			
*Double-crested cormorant	*Phalacrocorax auritus*	F	MB,CSC (nest)
Ardeidae			
*Black-crowned night heron	*Nycticorax nycticorax*	B/F	SA (rookery)
*Green heron	*Butorides virescens*	B/F	MB
*Great blue heron	*Ardea herodias*	B/F	MB,SA (rook'y)
*Great egret	*Ardea alba*	B/F	MB,SA (rook'y)
*Snowy egret	*Egretta thula*	B/F	MB,SA (rookery)

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1)	Status(2)
Anatidae			
*Mallard	*Anas platyrhynchos*	B/F	MB
*Gadwall	*Anas strepera*	F	MB
*Green-winged teal	*Anas crecca*	B/F	MB
*Bufflehead	*Bucephala albeola*	F	MB
*Cinnamon teal	*Anas cyanoptera*	B/F	MB
*Common merganser	*Mergus merganser*	F	MB
*Lesser scaup	*Aythya affinis*	B/F	MB
Charadriidae			
*Killdeer	*Charadrius vociferus*	B/F	MB
Scolopacidae			
*Spotted sandpiper	*Actitis macularia*	F	MB
*Greater yellowlegs	*Tringa melanoleuca*	F	MB
Cathartidae			
*Turkey vulture	*Cathartes aura*	F	MB
Threskiornitidae			
*White-faced ibis	*Plegadis chihi*	F	MB,CSC (rookery)
Rallidae			
*American coot	*Fulica americana*	B/F	MB
Laridae			
Western gull	*Larus occidentalis*	F	MB
Accipitridae			
*Red-tailed hawk	*Buteo jamaicensis*	B/F	MB,CP
*Red-shouldered hawk	*Buteo lineatus*	B/F	MB,CP
*Cooper's hawk	*Accipiter cooperi*	B/F	MB,CSC,CP
Sharp-shinned hawk	*Accipiter striatus*	F	MB,CSC,CP
Golden eagle	*Aquila chrysaetos*	F	MB,CSC,CP
Northern harrier	*Circus cyaneus*	F	MB,CSC,CP
Black-shouldered kite	*Elanus caerulus*	F	MB,CP
Falconidae			
*American kestrel	*Falco sparverius*	B/F	MB,CP
Phasanidae			
*California quail	*Lophortyx californicus*	B/F	MB
Mountain quail	*Oreortyx pictus*	F	MB
Columbidae			
*Mourning dove	*Zenaidura macroura*	B/F	MB
*Rock dove	*Columba livia*	B/F	MB
Band-tailed pigeon	*Columba fasciata*	B/F	MB
Common ground dove	*Columbina passerina*	F	--
Cuculidae			
*Greater roadrunner	*Geococcyx californianus*	B/F	MB

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1)	Status(2)
Tytonidae			
Barn owl	*Tyto alba pratincola*	B/F	MB,CP
Strigidae			
Great horned owl	*Bubo virginianus*	B/F	MB,CP
Long-eared owl	*Asio otus*	F	MB,CSC
Caprimuligidae			
Common poorwill	*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*	B/F	MB
Apodidae			
*White-throated swift	*Aeronautes saxatilis*	B/F	MB
Trochilidae			
*Anna's hummingbird	*Calypte anna*	B/F	MB
Black-chinned hummingbird	*Archilochus alexandri*	B/F	MB
Costa's hummingbird	*Calypte costae*	B/F	MB
Allen's hummingbird	*Selasphorus sasin*	B/F	MB
*Calliope hummingbird	*Stellula calliope*	F	MB
Alcedinidae			
*Belted kingfisher	*Ceryle alcyon*	B/F	MB
Picidae			
*Northern flicker	*Colaptes auratus*	B/F	MB
*Acorn woodpecker	*Melanerpes formicivorous*	B/F	MB
*Nuttall's woodpecker	*Picoides nuttallii*	B/F	MB,AWL
*Downy woodpecker	*Picoides pubescens*	B/F	MB
*Hairy woodpecker	*Picoides villosus*	B/F	MB
Tyrannidae			
*Western kingbird	*Tyrannus verticalis*	B/F	MB
Pacific slope flycatcher	*Empiodonax difficilis*	B/F	MB
*Ash-throated flycatcher	*Myiarchus cinerascens*	B/F	MB
Olive-sided flycatcher	*Contopus cooperi*	F	MB
*Western wood-pewee	*Contopus sordidulus*	B/F	MB
*Black phoebe	*Sayornis nigricans*	B/F	MB
Alaudidae			
California horned lark	*Eremophila alpestris actia*	F	MB,CSC
Hirundinidae			
*Cliff swallow	*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*	B/F	MB
Barn swallow	*Hirundo rustica*	B/F	MB
*Violet-green swallow	*Tachycineta thalassina*	F	MB
*Rough-winged swallow	*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*	B/F	MB
*Tree swallow	*Tachycineta bicolor*	B/F	MB
Corvidae			
*American raven	*Corvus corax*	B/F	MB
*American crow	*Corvus brachyrhynchos*	B/F	MB
*Scrub jay	*Aphelocoma coerulescens*	B/F	MB
Steller's jay	*Cyanocitta stelleri*	F	MB

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1)	Status(2)
Paridae			
*Oak titmouse	*Baeolophus inornatus*	B/F	MB,AWL
Aegithalidae			
*Common bushtit	*Psaltriparus minimus*	B/F	MB
Sittidae			
*White-breasted nuthatch	*Sitta carolinensis*	B/F	MB
Troglodytidae			
*Bewick's wren	*Thryomanes bewickii*	B/F	MB
House wren	*Troglodytes aedor*	F	MB
*Rock wren	*Salpinctes obsoletus*	B/F	MB
*Canyon wren	*Catherpes mexicanus*	B/F	MB
Muscicapidae			
*American robin	*Turdus migratorius*	B/F	MB
Blue-gray gnatcatcher	*Polioptila caerulea*	B/F	MB
*Wrentit	*Chamaea fasciata*	B/F	MB
*Western bluebird	*Sialia mexicana*	F	MB
Swainson's thrush	*Catharus ustulatus*	B/F	MB
Laniidae			
Loggerhead shrike	*Lanius ludovicianus*	B/F	MB, CSC
Mimidae			
*Northern mockingbird	*Mimus polyglottos*	B/F	MB
California thrasher	*Toxostoma redivivum*	B/F	MB
Vireonidae			
Least Bell's vireo	*Vireo belli pusillus*	F	MB,SE, FE
*Warbling vireo	*Vireo gilvus*	B/F	MB
*Hutton's vireo	*Vireo huttoni*	B/F	MB
Cassin's vireo	*Vireo cassini*	B/F	MB
Sturnidae			
*European starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*	B/F	--
Ptilogonatidae			
*Phainopepla	*Phainopepla nitens*	B/F	MB
Emberizidae			
*Orange-crowned warbler	*Vermivora celata*	B/F	MB
Yellow-rumped warbler	*Dendroica auduboni*	F	MB
Wilson's warbler	*Wilsonia pusilla*	B/F	MB
*Yellow warbler	*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*	F	MB,CSC
Yellow-breasted chat	*Icteria virens*	F	MB,CSC
*Common yellowthroat	*Geothlypis trichas*	B/F	MB
*White-crowned sparrow	*Zonotrichia leucophrys*	F	MB
*Song sparrow	*Melospiza melodia cooperii*	B/F	MB
S. California rufous-crowned sparrow	*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*	B/F	MB,CSC
Bell's sage sparrow	*Amphispiza belli belli*	B/F	MB,CSC
*Brewer's blackbird	*Euphagus cyanocephalus*	B/F	MB

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1)	Status(2)
*Red-winged blackbird	*Agelaius phoeniceus*	F	MB
*Tri-colored blackbird	*Agelaius tricolor*	F	MB,CSC
*Spotted towhee	*Pipilo maculatus*	B/F	MB
*Dark-eyed junco	*Junco hyemalis*	F	MB
*Black-headed grosbeak	*Pheucticus melanocephalus*	B/F	MB
Blue grosbeak	*Guiraca caerulea*	B/F	MB
*California towhee	*Pipilo crissalis*	B/F	MB
Lark sparrow	*Chondestes grammacus*	B/F	MB,SA
*Hooded oriole	*Icterus cucullatus*	F	MB
*Northern oriole	*Icterus galbula*	F	MB
*Brown-headed cowbird	*Molothrus ater*	B/F	MB
Lazuli bunting	*Passerina amoena*	F	MB
Western meadowlark	*Sturnella neglecta*	B/F	MB
Western tanager	*Piranga ludoviciana*	F	MB
Fringillidae			
*House finch	*Carpodacus mexicanus*	B/F	MB
*Lesser goldfinch	*Carduelis psaltria*	B/F	MB
*American goldfinch	*Carduelis tristis*	F	MB
*Purple finch	*Carpodacus purpureus*	F	MB
Cassin's finch	*Carpodacus cassinii*	F	MB
Passeridae			
House sparrow	*Passer domesticus*	B/F	--
MAMMALS			
Didelphidae			
*Virginia opossum	*Didelphis virginiana*	B/F	--
Vespertilionidae			
Big brown bat	*Eptesicus fuscus*	F	--
Red bat	*Lasiurus borealis*	F	--
California myotis	*Myotis californicus*	B/F	--
Fringed myotis	*Myotis thysanoides*	B/F	SA
Long-eared bat	*Myotis evotis*	B/F	--
*Yuma myotis	*Myotis yumanensis*	B/F	SA
Western pipistrelle	*Pipistrellus hesperus*	B/F	--
Hoary bat	*Lasiurus cinereus*	F	CSC
Pale big-eared bat	*Plecotus townsendii palescens*	F	CSC
Molossidae			
Brazilian free-tail bat	*Tadarida brasiliensis*	F	--
Pallid bat	*Antrozous pallidus*	B/F	CSC
California mastiff bat	*Eumops perotis californicus*	B/F	CSC
Canidae			
*Coyote	*Canis latrans*	B/F	--
*Gray fox	*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*	B/F	--
*Dog	*Canis familiaris*	B/F	--

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1)	Status(2)
Ursidae			
Black bear	*Ursus americanus*	F	--
Procyonidae			
*Raccoon	*Procyon lotor*	B/F	--
Ringtail	*Bassariscus astutus*	B/F	CP
Mustelidae			
Spotted skunk	*Spilogale putorius*	B/F	--
Striped skunk	*Mephitis mephitis*	B/F	--
Long-tailed weasel	*Mustela frenata*	F	--
American badger	*Taxidea taxus*	B/F	CSC
Cervidae			
*Black-tailed deer	*Odocoileus hemionus*	F	--
Felidae			
Mountain lion	*Felis concolor*	B/F	--
Bobcat	*Lynx rufus*	B/F	--
Feral cat	*Felis catus*	B/F	--
Sciuridae			
*California ground squirrel	*Spermophilus beecheyi*	B/F	--
Western gray squirrel	*Sciurus griseus*	B/F	--
Geomyidae			
Botta's pocket gopher	*Thomomys bottae*	B/F	--
Heteromyidae			
Pacific kangaroo rat	*Dipodomys agilis*	B/F	--
California pocket mouse	*Chaetodipus californicus*	B/F	--
Cricetidae			
Brush mouse	*Peromyscus boyleii*	B/F	--
California mouse	*Peromyscus californicus*	B/F	--
Harvest mouse	*Reithrodontomys megalotis*	B/F	--
Deer mouse	*Peromyscus maniculatus*	B/F	--
*Dusky-footed woodrat	*Neotoma fuscipes macrotis*	B/F	--
Arvicolidae			
California meadow vole	*Microtus californicus*	B/F	--
Leporidae			
*Audubon's cottontail	*Sylvilagus audubonii*	B/F	--
Brush rabbit	*Sylvilagus bachmanii*	B/F	--
Muridae			
Black rat	*Rattus rattus*	B/F	--
House mouse	*Mus musculus*	B/F	--

*Observed in the vicinity of the project site during field surveys conducted by Padre or Jim Greaves during 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009

Appendix C. Vertebrate Animal Species Observed or Expected in the Vicinity of the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Crossing, Ventura County, California

FAMILY Common Name	Scientific Name	Habitat Use(1) Status(2)

(1) Habitat Use
- B= Breeding
- F= Foraging

(2) Status
- AWL= Audubon Watch List
- BLM= Bureau of Land Management Sensitive
- BMC= Migratory Birds of Management Concern (USFWS)
- CDF= California Division of Forestry Sensitive
- CP= Protected under California Fish & Game Code
- CSC= California Species of Special Concern
- FSC= Federal Special Concern
- MB= Protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- SA= CDFG Special Animal
- SE= State Endangered
- FE= Federal Endangered
- FT= Federal Threatened

Amphibian and reptile nomenclature based upon Jensen (1983)
Bird nomenclature based upon American Ornithologists Union Checklist 7th Edition (1998)
Mammal nomenclature based upon Hall (1981)

APPENDIX D

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

APPENDIX D

COMMENT LETTERS RECEIVED ON THE PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

The following parties submitted written comments on the Draft MND:

Party	Date
San Buenaventura Conservancy	July 21, 2009
Chris Dellith, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service	July 27, 2009
Edmund J. Pert, California Department of Fish and Game	August 5, 2009
Alicia Stratton, Ventura County Air Pollution Control District	August 10, 2009
Ojai Valley Land Conservancy	August 13, 2009
Ray Hall & Mary Appel	August 11, 2009
A. Paul Jenkins, Surfrider Foundation	September 1, 2009

As a courtesy, responses to comments are provided in this section.

Commenter: San Buenaventura Conservancy

Date: July 21, 2009

Comment 1: It is our understanding that San Antonio Creek may have been the source point for the San Buenaventura Mission Aqueduct. Additional effort to verify the presence or absence of this significant resource in the project area is recommended.

Response: The project site was subject to an archaeological survey and no evidence of the mission aqueduct was noted. In addition, the project area of potential effect (APE) has been extensively disturbed by numerous flood events that have resulted in both the scouring and deposition of sediments. Other ground disturbances within the project APE include the construction of, repairs to, and the removal of the railroad, and the construction of and repairs to the Ojai Valley Trail. Based on the archaeological survey results in combination with the extent of past ground disturbances within the APE, “additional effort” to verify the presence or absence of the Mission Aqueduct within the project APE is not warranted at this time.

Comment 2: In reference to Part 10.b: CA-VEN-1109H, railroad spur. Historical resources are not solely considered for archaeological considerations. It is recommended that the railroad be evaluated under the other criteria as well. A historical resource may be listed in the California Register if it meets any of the following criteria: (1) it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage; (2) it is associated with the lives of persons important in California's past; (3) it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic value; or (4) it has yielded or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. It is clear that CA-VEN-1109H was only evaluated under 4) and not the other criteria. Railroad alignments, lacking tracks and other "railroad" accessories, have been found eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources and the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion 1, 2, and 3.

Response: The portion of the Ojai Valley Trail (old railroad spur route) that will be removed under the current project consists of a culvert bridge that was constructed in 1987. No structural features associated with the railroad are left within the project APE. CA-VEN-1109H is a linear resource that may indeed be eligible for listing on California Register or National Register under other criterion, but the portion of the railroad alignment within the project APE is a non-contributing element of the larger linear resource as it consists of a 23 year old culvert bridge.

Comment 3: Culverts in the area of Camulos were also found to be dated and older than 50 years. There is no evidence that the culverts in this document were appropriately studied to determine their context and associations. In reference to the evaluation of the railroad under 4) there is no documentary or presentation of a field investigation that would verify the levels of disturbance to this resource. No comparative evidence of "substantial alterations" are offered. What are the alterations cited? How were the alterations compared to "unaltered" segments?

Response: The portion of the Ojai Valley Trail (old railroad spur route) that will be removed under the current project consists of a culvert bridge that was constructed in 1987. The culvert bridge is less than 50 years old and is not historically significant.

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, California 93003

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

IN REPLY REFER TO:
2009-FA-0385

July 27, 2009

Theresa Lubin
Ventura County General Services Agency, Parks Department
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009-1610

Subject: Comments on the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Ojai Valley Trail – San Antonio Creek Bridge, Ojai, Ventura County, California

Dear Ms. Lubin:

We are responding to your request, received in our office on July 10, 2009, for comments on the draft mitigated negative declaration (DMND) for the subject project. The proposed project would consist of replacing the Ojai Valley Trail culvert crossing over San Antonio Creek with a span bridge and would include removal of the existing culverts and associated fill, construction of the bridge, and site restoration. Removal of the existing culvert would require excavation with heavy equipment. The replacement bridge would be at an elevation of approximately 22 feet (ft) (6.7 meters (m)) above than the creek and have a total length of 790 ft (240.9 m), including the approach ramps. The proposed project site is located within and adjacent to San Antonio Creek, approximately 0.3 mile north of the community of Casitas Springs, in an unincorporated portion of Ventura County, California. The project proponent is the Ventura County General Services Administration.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) responsibilities include administering the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act), including sections 7, 9, and 10. Section 9 of the Act prohibits the taking of any federally listed endangered or threatened species. Section 3(18) of the Act defines take to mean to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Service regulations (50 CFR 17.3) define harm to include significant habitat modification or degradation which actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering. Harassment is defined by the Service as an intentional or negligent action that creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering. The Act provides for civil and criminal penalties for the unlawful taking of listed species. Exemptions to the prohibitions against take may be obtained through the Service in two ways: through interagency consultation for projects with Federal involvement pursuant to section 7, or through the issuance of an incidental take permit under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act.

The DMND (Padre 2009) indicates that the sources of information used in developing the biological resources section included a search of rare, sensitive, threatened, and endangered species in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB); literature review; information from surveys for other projects in the vicinity; and a wetland assessment and site visit conducted for the subject project by Padre Associates in April, 2009. The project area consists of aquatic and upland habitats, including open water, freshwater marsh, riparian scrub, and riparian forest habitats. According to the endangered, threatened, and rare species section of the DMND, the federally listed species that occur, or have the potential to occur, within the proposed project area include the federally endangered southern California steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and the threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*). Steelhead are under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service and, as such, will not be further discussed herein.

According to the DMND and CNDDB (2009), California red-legged frogs were found in San Antonio Creek near the State Route 33 Bridge during surveys conducted by VJS Consulting in 2001 and Padre Associates in 2002. Least Bell's vireos use portions of the lower Ventura River for breeding (Fugro West 1995, URS 2000, Padre 2002). A pair of least Bell's vireos was found in 1993, approximately 7 miles downstream of the proposed project site and one male and two juveniles were found in 1995, approximately 8 miles downstream of the proposed project site (near the Main Street Bridge). Two least Bell's vireo nests were also found within the river corridor in 2003, in the proposed project area (Padre 2009).

Based on the proposed project description and the known geographic distribution of the least Bell's vireo and California red legged frog, the subject project activities may affect these species. The project proponent has proposed several mitigation measures (listed under Issue 6, Biological Resources, Part 6a on page 34 of the DMND) to reduce the potential impacts of the proposed project activities to listed species occurring within the area. However, we understand that surveys according to Service protocol for the least Bell's vireo and California red-legged frog have not been conducted within the proposed project area. We believe it is reasonable to expect that individual California red-legged frogs make overland excursions between the drainages in the Ventura River watershed and this species is expected to occur within the subject project site. Least Bell's vireos have bred in the Ventura River watershed and could occur in suitable habitat within the project area. As such, we recommend that you conduct surveys according to Service protocol for both least Bell's vireo and California red-legged frog to establish the status of these listed species within the proposed project area. Survey guidelines are available on our website (http://www.fws.gov/ventura/speciesinfo/protocols_guidelines/). If protocol surveys reveal that a federally-listed species is present and may be taken by project activities, you must obtain an exemption from the section 9 prohibitions of the Act. Exemptions may be obtained in one of two ways: 1) if a Federal nexus exists for the proposed project, formal consultation should be initiated with the Service pursuant to section 7 of the Act or 2) if no federal nexus exists, an Incidental Take Permit pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act may be applied for.

1

The Service has conservation responsibilities and management authority for migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (MBTA) (16 U.S.C. 703 et. seq.).

Any land clearing or other surface disturbance associated with proposed actions should be timed to avoid potential destruction of bird nests or young of birds that breed in the area, as such destruction may be in violation of the MBTA. Under the MBTA, nests with eggs or young of migratory birds may not be damaged, nor may migratory birds be killed. We are also concerned about the project's potential impacts to migratory birds; however, because the project proponent has proposed the mitigation measures listed under Issue 6 (Biological Resources, Part 6e on page 40 of the DMND), potential impacts to migratory birds would be avoided. 2

This letter does not reflect a comprehensive review of the DMND document on our part. Please note that despite the incorporation of any mitigation measures developed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, any take of listed species that could result from the proposed project would require exemption pursuant to section 7 or authorization pursuant to section 10 of the Act. 3

Only listed species receive protection under the Act; however, sensitive species should be considered in the planning process in the event they become listed or proposed for listing prior to project completion. We recommend that you review information in the California Department of Fish and Game's Natural Diversity Data Base. You can contact the California Department of Fish and Game at (916) 324-3812 for information on other sensitive species that may occur in this area. 4

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed project. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Heather Abbey of our staff at (805) 644-1766, extension 290.

Sincerely,

Chris Dellith
Senior Biologist

cc: Anthony Spina, National Marine Fisheries Service

REFERENCES

[CNDDB] California Department of Fish and Game, Natural Diversity Database. 2009. Element occurrence reports for the Matilija quad, Ojai, California. California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California.

Fugro West, Inc. 1995. Natural Environment Study for the Repair of the Main Street Bridge Ventura, California. Prepared for the City of San Buenaventura.

[Padre] Padre Associates, Inc. 2002. Draft Biological Impact Assessment for the State Route 33 Corridor Study. Prepared for the Ventura County Transportation Commission.

[Padre] Padre Associates, Inc. 2009. Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Bridge. Prepared for the Ventura County General Services Agency.

[URS] URS Corporation. 2000. Preliminary Assessment: Occurrence of Listed Wildlife Species in the Ventura River Habitat Conservation Plan Study Area. Prepared for Casitas Municipal Water District, City of San Buenaventura, County of Ventura, Ventura County Flood Control District, Ojai Valley Sanitary District, Meiners Oaks County Water Agency, Ventura County Water Agency, Southern California Water Company, Ojai Basin GMA.

Commenter: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date: July 27, 2009

Response:

1. As noted on page 33 of the Initial Study, the California red-legged frog is known from the project area and is presumed present at the project site. Therefore, surveys are not required. As noted on page 34 of the Initial Study, pre-construction surveys for listed species would be conducted. This measure has been modified to include protocol least Bell's vireo surveys. The project will require a Section 404 permit from the Corps of Engineers, and the Corps will consult with the Service as required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.
2. As noted in the Comment, mitigation has been provided in the MND to prevent take of migratory birds.
3. Take of listed species would be addressed as part of consultation between the Corps and the Service, and any additional avoidance and minimization measures recommended by the Service would be implemented as required by the Corps permit.
4. As noted on page 39 of the Initial Study, the Natural Diversity Data Base was consulted to identify special-status species that may occur in the project area. Impacts to these species are addressed in Part 6.e of the Initial Study.

California Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
South Coast Region
4949 Viewridge Avenue
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 467-4201
http://www.dfg.ca.gov

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor
DONALD KOCH, Director

August 5, 2009

Theresa Lubin
Ventura County General Services Agency
800 S. Victoria Blvd.
Ventura, CA 93003
Fax No.: (805) 662-6764

Subject: Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Ojai Valley Trail Bridge Project SCH #2009071051

Dear Ms. Lubin:

The Department of Fish and Game (Department), has reviewed the above Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (DMND) for impacts to biological resources. The Ventura County General Services Agency (County) proposes to replace the Ojai Valley Trail culvert crossing at San Antonio Creek (Creek) with an approximately 510-foot span bridge. The project location is west of State Route 33, at the confluence of San Antonio Creek with the Ventura River (River), approximately 0.3 miles north of the community of Casitas Springs, in Ventura County. The proposed bridge would improve passage for the Federally Endangered and State Special Concern Species southern steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). Project components include: construction of access ramps and vegetation removal, diversion of the Creek and River, removal of existing culverts, bridge construction, and site restoration. The total estimated footprint of all proposed construction is approximately 3.65 acres.

Habitat types with the potential to be impacted by the project include: willow scrub, freshwater marsh, willow riparian forest, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest. In addition to southern steelhead, wildlife with the potential to be impacted by the project include the Federal and State Endangered least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), the Federally Threatened and State Special Concern Species California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), and the State Special Concern Species arroyo chub (*Gila elegans*), yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*), southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*) two-striped garter snake (*thamnophis hammondii*), and Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*). Measures proposed to mitigate impacts include construction work limited to the dry season, April to October, development of a mitigation and monitoring plan, employment of a biological monitor for pre-construction surveys for special status species, construction monitoring, and avoidance or relocation of special status species detected in the work area.

The following statements and comments have been prepared pursuant to the Department's authority as Trustee Agency with jurisdiction over natural resources affected by the project (CEQA Guidelines §15386(a)) and pursuant to our authority as a Responsible Agency (CEQA Guidelines §15381) over those aspects of the proposed project that come under the purview of the Fish and Game Code Section 1600 et seq. As trustee for the State's fish and wildlife resources, the Department has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species.

Mitigation and Monitoring Plan

The Mitigation and Monitoring Plan has yet to be prepared. This is considered a deferral of mitigation per CEQA Guidelines §15126.4(a)(1)(B) which state "Formulation of mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future time." The Department proposes that mitigation and monitoring plan be prepared prior to the approval of the project. In addition, the Department's issuance of the required Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) is considered a project that is subject to CEQA. To minimize additional requirements by the Department pursuant to Section 1600 et seq., the DMND should fully identify the potential impacts to any drainage or riparian resources and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring and reporting commitments. The Department therefore recommends the following specific measures to mitigate proposed project impacts.

- Restoration should include the revegetation of stripped or exposed work and/or mitigation areas with vegetation native to the area.
- No native vegetation with a diameter at breast height (DBH) in excess of three inches should be removed or damaged without prior consultation and approval of a Department representative.
- In areas of temporary disturbance, where vegetation must be removed, native trees and shrubs, with DBHs of three inches or less, should be cut to ground level with hand operated power tools rather than by grading.
- No equipment should be operated or parked within the dripline of oaks. Protective fencing should be placed outside the dripline of oaks to prevent compaction of the root zone.
- Any oaks, California black walnuts and sycamores which are damaged/removed during construction operations should be replaced in-kind at a 10:1 (replacement to impact) ratio. Valley oaks should be replaced in-kind at a 15:1 ratio. Elderberry, cottonwood, and willows should be replaced at 5:1.
- The County should remove any non-native vegetation (tree tobacco, castor bean, giant cane, etc.) from the work area and should dispose of it in a manner and location which prevents its reestablishment. Removal should be done at least twice annually during the spring/summer season, as needed, through the term of restoration.
- The County should apply any herbicides in accordance with state and federal law. No herbicides should be used where Threatened or Endangered species occur. No herbicides should be used when wind velocities are above five miles per hour.
- Staging/storage areas for equipment and materials should be located outside of the stream/lake.
- The County should only use unconcreted rock rip-rap
- Structures and associated materials not designed to withstand high water flows should be moved to areas above high water before such flows occur.
- No concrete or concrete type material should be poured for any structure if rain is forecasted within 15 days. After November 1st, all poured concrete should contain a quick set ingredient to shorten the drying time.
- Raw cement/concrete or washings thereof, asphalt, paint, construction waste, or other coating material, oil or other petroleum products, or any other substances which could be hazardous to aquatic life, resulting from project related activities, should be prevented from contaminating the soil and/or entering the waters of the state. Any of these materials, placed within or where they may enter a stream or lake, by the County or any party working under contract, or with the permission of the County, should be removed immediately.
- Precautions to minimize turbidity/siltation should be taken into account during project planning and should be installed prior to construction. Water should be diverted around the work area by means of a barrier, temporary culvert, new channel, or other means

approved by the Department. A row of weed-free straw bales or silt fencing should be placed across the channel, prior to, and immediately downstream of any work done within the creek. Precautions should also include placement of silt fencing, weed-free straw bales, sand bags, and/or the construction of silt catchment basins, so that silt or other deleterious materials are not allowed to pass to downstream reaches. The method used to prevent siltation should be monitored, cleaned, and repaired weekly. The placement of any structure or materials in the stream for this purpose, not included in the original project description, or Department approved water pollution/water diversion plan should be coordinated with the Department.

- Silty/turbid water from dewatering or other activities should not be discharged into the stream. Such water should be settled, filtered, or otherwise treated prior to discharge. The County's ability to minimize turbidity/siltation should be the subject of pre-construction planning and feature implementation.
- The County should not remove or otherwise disturb vegetation or conduct any other project activities on the project site from March 1 to September 1 to avoid impacts to breeding/nesting birds. If construction activities cannot avoid the nesting season, the County should have a qualified biologist survey all breeding/nesting habitat within the project site and adjacent to the project site for breeding/nesting birds. If listed species are present, surveys should begin no later than June 1. Surveys should be conducted every 7 days for 8 consecutive weeks until at least July 1. Documentation of findings, including a negative finding should be submitted to the Department for review and concurrence. If no breeding/nesting birds are observed and concurrence has been received from the Department, site preparation and construction activities may begin. If breeding activities and/or an active bird nest is located and concurrence has been received from the Department, the breeding habitat/nest site should be fenced a minimum of 300 feet (500 feet for raptors) in all directions, and this area should not be disturbed until the nest becomes inactive, the young have fledged, the young are no longer being fed by the parents, the young have left the area, and the young will no longer be impacted by the project.
- If least Bell's vireo (LBV), willow flycatcher, red-legged frog, steelhead, southwestern pond turtle, California horned lizard, or any other T/E species or species of concern, are found within 500 feet of the work area, the County should contact the Department immediately of the sighting and should request an on-site inspection by Department representatives (to be done at the discretion of the Department) to determine if work should begin/proceed. If work is in progress when sightings are made, the County should cease all work within 500 feet of the area in which the sighting(s) occurred and should contact the Department immediately, to determine if work may recommence. Should these, or any other rare, threatened or endangered species, or species of concern, occur in the area, the County should submit, for Department review and approval, a plan to ensure that no rare, threatened or endangered species are disturbed during project implementation. The plan should be approved by the Department prior to initiation of any work.
- If nesting bird surveys are required and result in detection of nesting LBV within 500 feet of proposed construction activities, mitigation should include installation of a sound wall to prevent noise exceeding 60 DBa from reaching the active nest(s). The Department also recommends the project include cowbird trapping as an additional LBV mitigation measure to offset the temporary loss of habitat due to noise. Additional details of this mitigation measure can be developed further in the streambed alteration agreement and/or Incidental Take Permit, but the Department recommends a minimum of two cowbird traps, with the traps becoming operational beginning April 1 thru late fall, no later than November 30 of each year for five years.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment. Questions regarding this letter and further coordination on these issues should be directed to Mr. Martin Potter, Environmental Scientist, at (805) 640-3677.

Sincerely,

Edmund J. Pert
Regional Manager
South Coast Region

cc: Ms. Helen Birss, Los Alamitos
Ms. Betty Courtney, Newhall
Mr. Martin Potter, Ojai
Ms. Natasha Lohmus, Carpinteria
Mr. Sean Carlson, La Verne
Mr. Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento

Commenter: California Department of Fish and Game

Date: August 5, 2009

Response:

The MND includes the commitment to replace wetlands, aquatic and riparian habitat and oak trees (see page 34); therefore, mitigation has not been deferred. The mitigation and monitoring plan will provide details on implementation of the mitigation, and will be prepared during the permitting phase of the project, when specific requirements of the regulatory agencies are more fully known. We expect the project will comply with the recommended measures, as applicable and feasible.

The MND fully identified potential impacts to biological resources, including plants, vegetation, listed and non-listed special-status species, sensitive communities and wetlands.

VENTURA COUNTY
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT
Memorandum

TO: Theresa Lubin, General Services Agency DATE: August 10, 2009

FROM: Alicia Stratton

SUBJECT: Request for Review of Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Ojai Valley Trail Bridge at San Antonio Creek, Oak View, Ventura County Parks Department

Air Pollution Control District staff has reviewed the subject project, which is a proposal for replacement of the Ojai Valley Trail culvert crossing with a bridge at the San Antonio Creek, including removal of the existing culverts and associated fill, construction of the bridge and site restoration. The new bridge would have an overall length of 790 feet, including approach ramps. The bridge span would be 510 feet and deck elevation would be 323 feet, about 10-12 feet higher than the existing trail surface elevation. The project location is within and adjacent to San Antonio Creek approximately 0.3 miles north of Casitas Springs and 850 west of the State Route 33 bridge over San Antonio Creek in the unincorporated area of Ventura County.

Issue 3 of the mitigated negative declaration (Page 21) addresses air quality issues of the project. We concur with the findings of this discussion that long term air quality impacts will not result from the project. Short-term construction impacts would occur (118.8 lbs/day NOx and 8.0 lbs/day ROC), however those emissions are considered temporary in nature and do not apply toward the five lbs/day threshold of significance for projects in this area. The mitigation measures described on Pages 23-24 will minimize fugitive dust and particulate matter that may result from site preparation and construction activities on the site, however we recommend the following condition be added:

> All project construction and site preparation operations shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable VCAPCD Rules and Regulations with emphasis on Rule 50 (Opacity), Rule 51 (Nuisance), and rule 55 (Fugitive Dust), as well as Rule 10, (Permits Required).

If you have any questions, please call me at (805) 645-1426.

Commenter: Ventura County Air Pollution Control District

Date: August 10, 2009

Response:

The MND includes the recommended text (see page MND-3).

OJAI VALLEY LAND CONSERVANCY

Working to preserve Ojai's future - today

August 13, 2009

Theresa Lubin
Ventura County General Services Agency
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

RE: Ojai Valley Trail San Antonio Creek Bridge Mitigated Negative Declaration

Dear Ms. Lubin,

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) has reviewed the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) proposed for the above referenced project which describes replacement of the Ojai Valley Trail (OVT) culvert crossing with a bridge at San Antonio Creek. The project includes removal of the existing culverts and associated fill, construction of the bridge, and site restoration. As a conservation landowner of properties within the confluence area we are very interested in a holistic project design that will maximize wildlife habitat, recreational, scenic, and water quality values.

With this goal in mind and after consultation with Ventura County General Services Agency and California Department of Fish and Game, we offer the following comments.

To minimize the size and footprint of the bridge as well as impacts and cost, we recommend relocating the crossing point upstream of the confluence on San Antonio Creek. Topography in this new location would eliminate the need for a 790-foot bridge and minimize future encroachment to the OVT from the Ventura River. It would allow for use of the existing crossing during construction of the new bridge and reduce the extent to which the river will need to be diverted during construction activities. We feel strongly that this is the most beneficial alternative for wildlife and the community.

OVLC is committed to this project and offers assistance and support in its implementation.

Sincerely,

Greg Gamble
Executive Director

P.O. Box 1092 Ojai, CA 93024 Phone: (805) 649-6852 Fax: (805) 649-8913 email: ovlc@ovlc.org www.ovlc.org

Commenter: Ojai Valley Land Conservancy

Date: August 13, 2009

Response:

Based on hydraulic modeling conducted for the project by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District, the modeled 100-year water surface elevation increases upstream such that a similarly long bridge would be required for an upstream location to allow the bridge span to be elevated above the water surface elevation and prevent flooding impacts. Residences located just north of the existing crossing are located approximately 1 foot above the modeled 100-year water surface elevation and would be inundated by virtually any project-related increase in flood water elevation.

The Ventura River will need to be diverted to allow removal of the existing culverts, regardless of the location of the new bridge. In addition, moving the Ojai Valley Trail crossing to the east of the confluence would require removal of sensitive riparian habitat. Overall, relocating the bridge site further upstream of the confluence would not reduce costs or environmental impacts.

Ventura County General Services Agency, Parks Department
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009-1610
Attention: Theresa Lubin

Aug. 11, 2009

Dear Ms. Lubin:

We received a Notice of Intent to Adopt Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, and have had the opportunity to review the plan for the Ojai Valley Trail Bridge at San Antonio Creek. We have several strong objections to the plan, which we will explain.

1. The Ojai Valley Trail in this area has been in existence for twenty years, and only twice can we remember it being damaged. It would be a huge waste of money and manpower to replace it with an expensive bridge when the County is already experiencing budget problems. Most years, the overpass suffers no damage, and the damage it has suffered could be corrected by re-building it as it was. The reason there has been damage to the trail in recent years, is that several years ago Ventura County, in order to protect Santa Ana Road, diverted the river to run to the east, destroying the trail and other properties, including ours.

2. There have been no steelhead salmon in the Ventura River since 1935. We have spoken to old-timers in the area, and they can vouch for the absence of steelhead since that time. As the river is sometimes dry, it would be impossible for them to return. Casitas Water District has kept a chart on water flows for the past 80 years. Their records show that there is not enough water in the river to sustain migration of fish.

3. Our main concern, of course, is that this bridge would block access to our property at 111 W. Old Creek Road along the Ojai Valley Trail. Our entrance is at the end of West Old Creek Road, and your map shows the proposed bridge crossing in front of our driveway. It would be illegal for you to block access to our property. In 1904, Congress decreed that when a railroad is abandoned, the right-of-way on which the railroad was built, goes back to the adjacent landowners. So we, and other landowners adjacent to the trail, still own the land on which the trail is built. We do not give permission for this project to move forward.

Sincerely,

Ray Hall email: chiefhawk@windstream.net
8740 South 1975 Road
Humansville MO 65674
Submitted by Mary Appel email: maryappel@aol.com
Mary Appel
P.O. Box 962
Oak View, CA 93022

Commenter: Ray Hall & Mary Appel

Date: August 11, 2009

Response:

1. The General Services Agency can provide photo-documentation of numerous storm events causing damage to the Ojai Valley Trail. However, the primary purpose of the bridge is to improve fish passage (see page 2 of the Initial Study).
2. Padre Associates biologists observed rainbow trout (presumed steelhead) at the project site (see page 33 of the Initial Study). In addition, adult steelhead have been photographed at the Robles Diversion fish ladder (see the Casitas Municipal Water District website).
3. The proposed bridge would not block access to the residence, as the driveway is east of the Ojai Valley Trail and proposed bridge. Access to the property west of the Ojai Valley Trail would also be maintained as vehicles may pass under the bridge (see STA 2+50 on Figure 3 of the Initial Study).

Surfrider Foundation

Ventura County Chapter – Matilija Coalition
PO Box 1028, Ventura, CA 93002
(805) 667-2222 **www.matilija-coalition.org**

September 1, 2009

Ventura County General Services Agency
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California, 93009
Contact: Ms. Theresa Lubin

RE: **OJAI VALLEY TRAIL SAN ANTONIO CREEK BRIDGE**

Dear Ms. Lubin

We have reviewed the Draft MND for the OJAI VALLEY TRAIL SAN ANTONIO CREEK BRIDGE project and have the following comments:

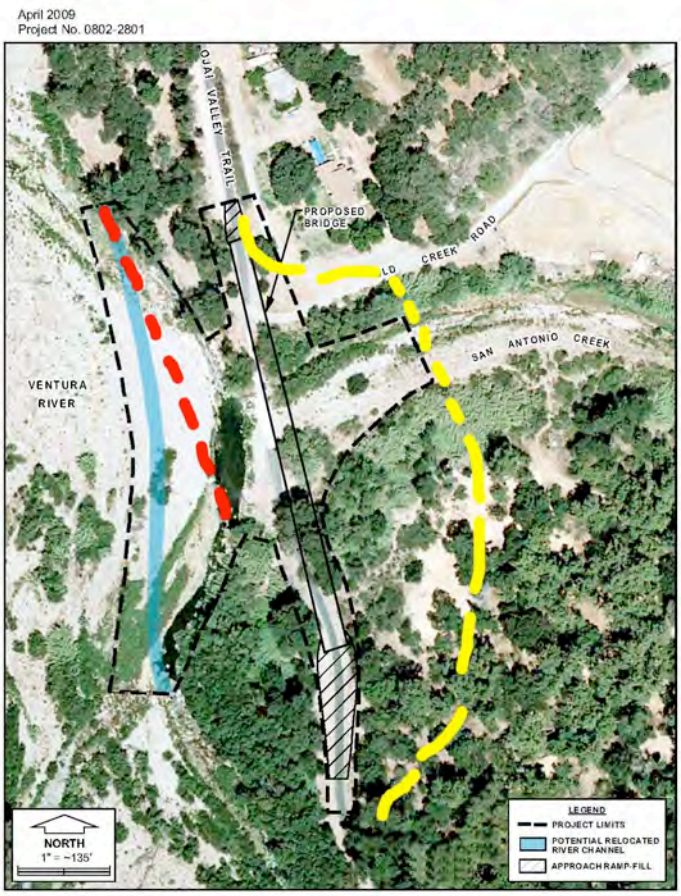
BRIDGE ALIGNMENT:

The proposed location necessitates a long and expensive bridge. We recommend that if it is possible to obtain easements and cooperative agreements with adjacent landowners, the bridge should be constructed further upstream on San Antonio Creek. This would provide the additional benefit of allowing re-alignment of the bike and equestrian trail through the Confluence Preserve managed by the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. 1

STEELHEAD:

This 'live reach' of the river has historically provided important perennial habitat for the endangered southern steelhead. In 2008 and 2009, the Matilija Coalition-sponsored steelhead surveys have documented the presence of significant numbers of fish in the confluence pool and downstream reaches. In addition to the Draft reports by consulting biologists Thomas Paine and Assoc., we have collected photo and video documentation. More here: http://venturaecosystem.blogspot.com/2009/08/2009-steelhead-surveys.html 2

We highly recommend that if the river is to be diverted away from the project area, that the flow be directed to maintain water levels in the pool directly downstream. The vegetation in this pool provides cover and important refugia for steelhead, and should not be de-watered. A suggested diversion alignment is pictured below.



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PROJECT SITE
FIGURE 2

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT:

The existing bike path and grouted riprap have created a scour pool that has become both steelhead habitat and recreational area. Because of it's high visibility and accessibility, swimmers and equestrians frequent this pool. The combination of the grouted riprap and equestrian access to the pool have eliminated any vegetation on the bank, and perhaps contributed to bank erosion. The MND does not specify any restoration in this area. 3

There is an opportunity to restore this stream bank using bio-engineering methods to stabilize the bank. Equestrian access should be re-routed to avoid direct impacts to the river and habitat.

PROJECT INTEGRATION:

The Confluence Preserve has the potential to become a high-profile example of *Integrated Watershed Management* on the Ventura River. An integrated project at the confluence of Ventura River and San Antonio Creek will provide multiple benefits for all stakeholders. 4

Existing conditions: bike path impacted during storms, steelhead passage impaired, riparian habitat impacted by current uses, infrastructure at risk, impacts from levee project

There are several projects underway or being proposed at this site:

1) WPD Levee Upgrade
2) OVLC Habitat restoration
3) OVSD sewer upgrade/relocation
4) VC Fish passage/culvert upgrade
5) More? CMWD?

These projects are not currently integrated, but there may be an opportunity to leverage existing funding to obtain additional grants to implement an integrated solution to all the existing issues:

Water Infrastructure Upgrade/Relocation
Bridge construction to replace current culvert
Bike trail realignment into oak woodland
Equestrian trail realignment/management plan to reduce impacts
Levee removal – northern 300 ft(?) is obsolete
Riparian Restoration/ floodplain enhancement/steelhead habitat creation

Objectives:

4

a. Recreation
b. Riparian Habitat Restoration
c. Infrastructure upgrade/disaster avoidance
d. Mitigation

Recreation:

Ojai Bike Trail
Bridge - enhance trail useability during rainy season
Equestrian Trail
Designated equestrian areas – protect and enhance habitat

Habitat Restoration:

Enhance/restore floodplain
Setback bike path
Levee removal to reconnect floodplain
Plant large riparian cover to stabilize streambank
Steelhead habitat – enhance fish passage, create pools, cover, etc

Infrastructure upgrade/disaster avoidance:

Water & Wastewater pipes crossing creek and preserve
Upgrade to avoid potential future sewer discharge/water supply impacts
Avoid future streambank hardening to protect infrastructure

Sincerely,

A. Paul Jenkin, M.S.

Coordinator, Matilija Coalition
Environmental Director, Surfrider Foundation, Ventura County Chapter
(805) 648-4005 paul@matilija-coalition.org

Commenter: Surfrider Foundation

Date: September 1, 2009

Response:

1. Constructing the bridge upstream of the existing crossing on San Antonio Creek would result in substantial habitat loss within the Preserve and is unlikely to be acceptable to local property owners. In addition, floodplain modeling indicates such an alignment would not allow a shorter bridge or reduce costs. The existing alignment was selected to minimize biological impacts, and minimize costs while preventing flooding impacts.
2. The precise location of the diversion channel will be determined during the permitting phase in coordination with regulatory agencies, with the goal of minimizing diversion-related impacts (e.g., pool dewatering) while preventing construction-related impacts (e.g., water quality degradation, heavy equipment use) to aquatic habitat. The General Services Agency will consider the recommended diversion channel alignment during the permitting process.
3. The primary objective of the project is to enhance fish passage, and the existing culverts and rock riprap at the crossing will be removed and the confluence area contoured and revegetated to match adjacent natural areas. The Ventura River flow diversion channel will be left in place as a low flow channel to prevent future erosion of the bridge supports. However, this low flow channel is expected to migrate over time. The stream bank (Ventura River levee) will not be modified. The elevated bridge crossing over San Antonio Creek will prevent equestrian access to surface waters.
4. The project is funded through a fish habitat grant and has already been designated as matching funds for a Federal grant, that does not allow contributions offered as a match to be used with other federal grants.